School of Theology at Claremont
1001 1383284

THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

G. WADDY POLKINGHORNE

BS
2320
P6

The Library

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT

WEST FOOTHILL AT COLLEGE AVENUE
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA

W. E. Royston

MANUALS FOR CHRISTIAN THINKERS.

FREDERICK
LAWRENCE

THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

BS
2330
P6

BY

G. WADDY POLKINGHORNE

CHARLES H. KELLY
LONDON: 25-35 CITY ROAD, AND
26 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

First Edition, 1914

TO THE
MEMORY OF
MY FATHER

Theology Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT
California

A5711

Theology Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT
California

PREFACE

THE object of this little book is to interest young preachers and teachers and the elder scholars in Sunday schools in a subject which is, to all intents and purposes, placed beyond their reach by the high price and technical character of the text-books. I have tried, therefore, to tell the story in simple language, omitting controversial matters as far as possible, and avoiding all that is purely academical, in order to give a general idea of the processes which produced the New Testament.

There is no attempt at originality, and my indebtedness is too evident to call for specification. I should like, however, to thank my friend and former colleague, the Rev. James Conder Nattrass, B.A., B.D., for much advice and encouragement in the genesis of my undertaking.

G. W. P.

HERNE HILL,
March, 1914.

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTORY FACTS	11
II.	THE BIBLE OF THE EARLY CHURCH	20
III.	THE CHURCH OF THE APOSTLES	31
IV.	THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS	41
V.	THE POST-APOSTOLIC PERIOD	54
VI.	THE EARLY HERETICS	71
VII.	THE CLOSE OF THE SECOND CENTURY	82
VIII.	THE THIRD CENTURY	94
IX.	THE FOURTH CENTURY	107
X.	THE FINAL SETTLEMENT	118
	BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY	124
	INDEX	127

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY FACTS

WHAT we call the New Testament is a library of ancient writings, consisting of twenty-seven works of various character and size, written by at least nine different authors. It is a definite collection from which all other writings of that early age are now rigidly excluded, but which is always understood to consist of just those twenty-seven works. It is impossible for a thinking person to make use of this remarkable book for long without asking the question, How did this come to be? Here is a book which, for many centuries, has been regarded as sacred by multitudes of people, and as unique by multitudes more who do not make any special profession of religious regard for it. Why were these writings alone included? Why were all others, and some others in particular, excluded?

The Fact of the New Testament

Here are four accounts of the life of Jesus; a vivid story of the spread of Christianity in the

Roman Empire; nine letters (some of them of considerable length) from Paul to Churches, and four to individuals; eight other letters to Churches and persons from other hands; and a strange composition, called an Apocalypse, probably from the writer of one of the gospels and three of the shorter letters. The writing of these compositions must have been spread over at least four or five decades. There was a time, then, even since the beginning of the Christian era, when there was no New Testament, and when there was no thought of such a thing. How, then, did the idea take its rise? Or was there any idea at all of a collection of writings, until several of them began to be treasured, one here and another there? In short, here is a well-defined fact. How is it to be explained? It must have had a beginning. It must have come gradually, one might well say imperceptibly, into being. Book by book, it must have grown through a long period, until at last it came to be known and recognized as an organic whole over, at any rate, a very wide area of Christendom.

Whence came it?

A very important element in this strange evolution of the New Testament from the varied writings of the first Christian age, is the authoritative character which the book has been recognized as possessing. A moment's thought will reveal the fact that this must very largely account

for the survival of these writings at all, to say nothing of their association. Is it possible to discover, among the circumstances of the early Church, any clear indications of the gradual attribution to or recognition in them of a normative quality, that is, of their containing a rule of life, which made them of peculiar value and authority to those who read them? They must have been regarded as *special*, to have been preserved, for we know of other writings, letters of Paul for instance, which have perished. They were not preserved as were these, and hence we infer that they were not regarded in the same light. Further, they must have been considered special, since other very remarkable writings have survived which are not now included in the New Testament.

Its Recognition as Authoritative

It will be evident that our search must include several things. We must try to discover when and how these twenty-seven writings came to be regarded as worthy of elevation to the higher level. We must try to fix the time when two or more of them were put together, and when the others were added to them. We may find that, at first, in some churches, other compositions were put alongside them, which were omitted at a later date by more or less general consent. We must trace the

What we have to look for

development by degrees, and in various parts of the growing area of Christendom, of what is now called the Canon of the New Testament. This will reveal itself in several ways. There will be, in other writings, certain shades of thought and turns of expression which will strongly suggest that the author is influenced by his acquaintance with our New Testament writers. This is, of course, very subjective and uncertain in its evidential value, though it may be none the less real for all that. Then, secondly, there will be quotations, sometimes very exact, often very free, varying between the extreme limits of a similarity of phrase which may be only accident or coincidence on the one hand, and a carefully copied extract from the actual work on the other. Then, thirdly, we may have direct reference by name to the author and his work, perhaps accompanied by an extract.

Again, before the Canon of the New Testament can be regarded as fully established, we must look for evidence that these books were valued in an especial manner as having superior authority or as being of peculiar worth for the private reading of Christians, or for their public worship. Further, we must seek for evidence which puts these books on the same level as the writings of the Old Testament, which were used by the early Christians as sacred. Finally, we must look for proofs, in the decisions of councils and works of individual writers, that

these books were considered and pronounced canonical.

We have used the word 'Canon.' What does it mean? A little time will be well spent in tracing its long and interesting history.

The Meaning of the Word Canon

The Hebrew language contains a word *qānāh*, which means *to make* (or *place*) *upright*. From that meaning it came to signify *to create* or *to found*. Among its further secondary meanings are *to gain* and *to buy*. From this verb is derived quite regularly the noun *qāneh*, which means *a reed*—doubtless from its straight and erect habit of growth. Then it came to be used for *a measuring-rod*, for which purpose the reed was often employed, and then for the *beam* of a pair of scales, and also for the *scales* themselves. The Greek word *kanna* has a very similar range of meanings. It denotes a *reed* (compare the French *canne* and the English *cane*), and in the plural, a *reed-fence* or other article made by weaving reeds together. From this word we get *kanōn*, signifying any *straight rod* or *bar*, as a *yard-stick* or the *tongue* or *beam* of a balance. From the meaning of *measuring-rod* it is but a short step to those of *plumb-line*, *level*, *ruler* or *rule*—anything, in short, used as a standard for the judgement of other things.

Having attained to this general sense, it is very natural that, by degrees, among a philosophical people like the Greeks, it should

take on a metaphorical meaning. Hence it comes about that we find rules of conduct and action called canons. As illustrations of this usage may be given Polycleitus' famous statue, the Doryphorus, or Spear-bearer, which was called the Canon, because it was considered the perfect type of the male figure; and those writings which we should call the classics were called by the Alexandrian grammarians the Canon—a name which they also gave to their rules of declension and conjugation. Similarly in history, certain dates were called Canons, since from them the periods were reckoned as we date everything B.C. or A.D., from the Canon of the Birth of Christ.

Metaphorical Use of the Word

In ethics and philosophy the word was frequently used in a similar sense. Euripides speaks of a canon of good. Philo calls Joshua a canon, meaning that he was a model for all subsequent leaders of men. The word was reserved for those laws, orders or rules, which only existed as mental concepts, other words being used for those which were written or otherwise made concrete. Such a word, naturally, would be found very useful by Christians. Paul uses it in Gal. vi. 16, 'As many as shall walk by this *canon*, peace be upon them.' That is, who recognize this conception of the value of a new creation in

Use of the Word in the New Testament

comparison with such matters as the observance or non-observance of circumcision. In 2 Cor. x, 13–16, he speaks of 'the measure of the *canon* (R.V. province) which God apportioned to us as a measure,' and of being 'magnified in you according to our *canon*,' and again, of not 'glorying in another's *canon*.'

Passing beyond the bounds of the New Testament, we find the word somewhat frequently used in early Christian works. Until we reach the middle of the third century, however, it stands for an ideal in the mind rather than a pronouncement or ordinance. Gradually its meaning reverted to the concrete from which it had started, and *Canon* was used to designate an ecclesiastical decision. Thus the *Canon* of the Church became the term used to denote its custom, rule, or doctrine as a whole. Then, in the early years of the fourth century, we reach the next stage in the development of the use of the word, when the plural appears as signifying the decisions of authorities, whether they were bishops or councils. At last, about the middle of the fourth century, we find the word applied to the books of Scripture indirectly, when the Synod of Laodicea (363) refers to certain 'uncanonical books' as distinguished from the 'canonical books of the New and Old Testaments.'

This employment of the word may mean either of two things—that the names of these books were found in a certain list or canon; or that

they were regarded as themselves providing a canon or norm (that is, rule). It was probably in this latter sense that the books of the New Testament were first regarded, and then gradually the idea grew of adding a limited number to the Old Testament Scriptures as of equal value with them, and thus of forming a Canon of Scripture as we now understand the term.

We see how the word 'Canon' grew to mean a specific collection of writings regarded as sacred in authority, strictly exclusive in character, and forming a rule of truth. But this idea also was one of gradual growth, and it is a little difficult, but none the less necessary, for us to remember that there was a time when the early Christians had no Canon, and no thought of one, other than that which they shared with, and inherited from, Judaism.

Our Plan of Study

That will give us a convenient point of departure in our study.

We shall, in the next chapter, sketch briefly the history of the formation of the Jewish Canon, and show its value for the early Church. Following that, we shall try to reconstruct the conditions of worship and faith of the first generations of Christians, to whom the books of the New Testament were addressed. We shall then collect such evidence as is available along the lines laid down on page 13, concluding with a summary.

We shall have to try to think ourselves back

into those early times and conditions, and imagine what was the most probable treatment accorded to these letters and other documents sent by individuals and Churches to one another, tracing the gradual emergence of an ordered collection of authorized and officially sanctioned scriptures from the mists and uncertainties of the first centuries.

It must be remembered that in many of the problems which confront us the utmost we can attain is the establishment of probabilities. But it must also be borne in mind that nearly all certainty is founded on calculations of probabilities. It is all that we can get, but it will, in the issue, prove to be all that we need.

CHAPTER II

THE BIBLE OF THE EARLY CHURCH

THE Christian Church originated in Judaism. The account of its birth on the day of Pentecost, as given in the second chapter of the Book of Acts, speaks of Jews and proselytes from every part of the Roman Empire. This vast concourse of people, drawn together by community of religious interest, represented the dispersion of Jews throughout the then-known world. Though they still regarded the Temple as the centre of attraction, it was not so much the Temple which was the real bond of union as their possession of certain sacred books. The Apostle James tells us in Acts xv. 21 that 'Moses from generations of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath.' Though numbers of Jews were won by the preaching of the Apostles, still they gained the larger bulk of their converts from the ranks of proselytes, to whom they turned when the Jews rejected their message,

Jewish Origin of the Church

and who had been taught to regard with reverence the Jewish scriptures. The early Christians thus inherited from Judaism a book, and Christianity began to be a book-religion. We can see by reference to the New Testament how this book was looked upon by the various writers and readers of the new era. We find the comprehensive term 'scriptures' in such passages as Matt. xxii. 29; Acts xvii. 11; 1 Cor. xv. 3; John v. 39. In Matt. vii. 12, Rom. iii. 21, and John i. 45, there emerges a distinction into 'Law and Prophets,' which is carried still further in Luke xxiv. 44, where we read of 'the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms.' This brings us to notice a fact which is of the greatest importance to our present study.

Three Groups of Books

The Hebrew Bible, as printed and published to-day, bears upon its back the cumbrous title, 'Law, Prophets, and Writings.' This is a distinction of very great age, and is probably an index of the gradual growth of the Jewish canon from its constituents. Opening the Bible we find that the first section, 'The Law,' consists of five books called the 'Books of Moses,' or the Pentateuch. The history of their origin is involved in considerable obscurity, but their existence as a single group probably dates from the time of Ezra in B.C. 444. The finding of the Roll of the Law in the Temple in the reign of Josiah was the commencement of the composition

of a sacred literature, of which the Law was the first representative, and remained the type.

The Law

Josiah's discovery took place in B.C. 621. Prior to that date we find no trace of a canon, nor indeed of any literature that had any peculiar sanctity. Between that date and the promulgation of the completed Law by Ezra, the first section of the Old Testament grew into its present form. The fact that the Samaritan canon consists of the Pentateuch alone is evidence that for some time there was no other canonical literature known to the Jews, but that these five books were accepted as sacred before the breach occurred between the Jews and the Samaritans over the rebuilding of the Temple and City of Jerusalem.

The Prophets

The possession of their earlier history as contained in the Pentateuch would doubtless stimulate the desire of the Jews to have an authenticated continuation of the national story, especially as various documents existed from which such a history could be compiled. In this way the second group arose. The prophets had from time to time placed on record the annals of the nation, as we learn from several references to their writings in the Books of Samuel and Kings. Thus arose the 'Former Prophets' (so called from their position in the old MSS, not from any chronological relations), which comprised the four books: Joshua, Judges,

Samuel, and Kings (each in one volume). In addition to this historical matter there was a growing mass of prophecies, oracles, dooms, and the like, from which later literary authorities compiled a second sub-group of books called the 'Latter Prophets,' also originally in four volumes: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the 'Book of the Twelve Prophets,' containing those shorter writings which, for that reason alone, we call the 'Minor Prophets.'

Of these, the Former Prophets, that is, the books of prophetic history, were probably compiled during the Exile—say by the middle of the sixth century B.C. The Latter Prophets were gathered together and edited and re-edited until about 250 to 200 B.C., when we may safely assume that they had reached very much their present form, though it was a matter of gradual growth of usage and habit, spreading over at least another century, which extended to them equal sanctity with the Law.

Alongside of these processes, however, there had been growing up a literature of a varied kind. Many books were written which came to be recognized as instinct with divine teaching, and even to have been produced by the operation of the Spirit of God. Some of these existed, fragmentarily, from an earlier period than even the canonization of the Law: as, for example, parts of the Books of Psalms and Proverbs.

The 'Writings'

Other portions may have been written, or at any rate cast into their present form, as late as the second century B.C. But some time between B.C. 130 (when there is no trace of a definite collection of 'Holy Writings') and A.D. 90, the third group was formed. This consisted of eleven books: three of them of considerable size—Psalms, Proverbs, and Job; five were smaller and were called the Megilloth or Rolls, and were read at the various Jewish feasts or anniversaries, viz.: Canticles (Passover), Ruth (Feast of Weeks or Harvest Festival), Lamentations (Destruction of Jerusalem), Ecclesiastes (Feast of Tabernacles), and Esther, which was read at the Feast of Purim or Lots, to account for which it was apparently written. Finally, there were three other books of an historical character: Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah (in one), and Chronicles, also in one.

Thus we get the twenty-four books of the Old Testament canon as they were reckoned in the time of our Lord. By that time they were not only all in existence, but were also recognized as authoritative, though for nearly two centuries later there were still some doubts and debate as to the right of individual writings to a position of equality with the supremely sacred Law and Prophets. There is also evidence of such high regard for some other books which were written during and after the Exile that we find them quoted and referred to with very nearly the same

reverence that is shown for the canonical books. But we will return to this point later. Our present concern is with those writings which were now more or less in the balance, but which eventually won their way into the Bible. Two statements may be made without reserve: First, the Canon, as we have it to-day, existed *virtually* for a century or more before Christ, though it was not formally recognized until about a century after the beginning of the Christian era. At the seaport town of Jamnia, which became the head quarters of official Judaism after the destruction of Jerusalem, a Council or Debate took place about A.D. 90, at which, among other things, it was finally decided that 'all Holy Scriptures defile the hands, even Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes defile them.' This peculiar phrase relates to the decree of the rabbis, for the greater preservation and honour of the Scriptures, that he who touched any sacred book without its proper covering upon it, should incur ceremonial defilement, involving the customary tiresome routine of cleansing and offerings. Thus we discover the existence of a belief in degrees of inspiration even among those books which had won their way to the highest respect of the nation. The other statement to be made is that no book purporting to have been written later than about the middle of the third

Tardy closing of the Old Testament Canon

century B.C. finally found a place within the sacred limits. All these facts go to prove that the Canon was a matter of slow and extended growth, and, as regards the third section of the Jewish Bible, which was also the only Bible of the early Christians, the limits were not considered as at all rigidly fixed, even by Jews themselves, until much later than the period when the New Testament writings were put forth.

These conclusions are confirmed by the fact that the Bible of the Christian Church was not a Hebrew volume at all, but a Greek translation made in the famous city of Alexandria, and called the Septuagint or the LXX. This name arose from the legend that King Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt sent a request to the High Priest Eleazar of Jerusalem to send him a copy of the Scriptures, and seventy (or more accurately seventy-two) learned men to translate it into Greek for the use of the wider world. The legend further says that these seventy-two men were shut up in pairs in thirty-six cells, and that the resulting translations were identical. The facts of the case seem to have been that some time between the middle of the third century B.C. and its close, the Scriptures were translated into Greek, and this undoubtedly soon became the standard Bible of the Jews throughout the Roman Empire, in which Greek was the most widely spoken language. A glance

The LXX or Septuagint

at the contents of the LXX shows us, however, that it was a very different book from our Old Testament. It may be useful here to name the writings composing this, the most ancient as it is by far the most famous version of the Old Testament Scriptures, in the order in which they most probably appeared in the copies used by the early Christians. They are: Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Esdras 1, Esdras 2 (i.e. Ezra-Nehemiah), Tobit, Judith, Esther (with the additional chapters), Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Wisdom of Solomon, Wisdom of Sirach, the 'Twelve,' Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch, Lamentations, Epistle of Jeremias, Ezekiel, Daniel (with additional chapters), four books of Maccabees, and the Prayer of Manasses.

Its Contents

Two things are made clear by this list: First, that there are several books which were not accepted by the Palestinian Jews; and secondly, that the lines of cleavage into Law, Prophets, and Writings are not much observed in the Alexandrian canon. This overplus of books we now call the Apocrypha, giving to them the old name, meaning *hidden*, and implying that they were originally kept from the public, either because they were accounted harmful, or because they contained esoteric, that is, secret, teaching. This was the Bible from which the great Latin

Apocrypha

Version, known as the Vulgate (or Common) was made, and so these books became part of the Roman Catholic Bible. Protestants generally do not admit them, although the Anglican Church, while not using them doctrinally, has included some of them in her Lectionary.

This distinction between the Palestinian and the Alexandrian canons, especially in the different estimates they put upon inspiration, is borne out by the testimonies of two representative writers of the first Christian century. Josephus, in his treatise, generally known as 'Against Apion,' written rather later than A.D. 93, enumerates twenty-two books as forming the Scriptures, and probably arrives at that symbolical number (the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet) by joining Ruth to Judges, and Lamentations to Jeremiah. Philo, a Jew of Alexandria, writing a little earlier, confirms the Palestinian list, but by his great emphasis upon the supremacy of the Law seems to suggest an inferior degree of inspiration in the other books; and he quotes from several of the Greek writings which, though found in the Alexandrian, have never formed part of the Palestinian canon.

These are the facts in brief outline. What inferences can we draw from them? In the first place, it is abundantly evident that the first Christians had the same reverence for the Law and the Prophets that their neighbours felt. But there was the same uncertainty for them as

for others as to the exact composition of the third great section of the Scriptures.

Inferences

Their attitude to individual books, both within and without the present canon, would be largely a matter of geography. Thus we find Bishop Melito of Sardis, in Asia Minor, making a special journey to Palestine in A.D. 170, to discover what books were actually received there as Scripture. We have the list, and it is interesting to note that he omits the Book of Esther, which had been, from the first, an object of suspicion, though it is just possible that this is only an accidental omission.

Again, we cannot fail to see that the process of canonization is a slow and entirely unofficial one. These books were not first officially pronounced canonical by some ecclesiastical board, and thereupon accepted by the community. It is altogether the other way about. They were gradually made the subjects of universal regard and reverence, and then the authorities in session assembled declared that fact, and announced that these, and not those, were generally accepted.

Once more, it is surely fair to suppose that, if, and as long as, the door was not considered finally closed which admitted into the Bible, and taking into account the comparative illiteracy and isolation of large masses of Christians in the first century, no sense of sacrilege would be felt

to attach to the association of writings by the Apostles and early leaders of the Church with the Scriptures. What this meant and how it operated, we are now in a position to estimate.

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH OF THE APOSTLES

'AFTER the Way which they call a sect, so serve I the God of our fathers, believing all things which are according to the law, and which are written in the prophets.' In these words to Felix, Paul defines the position of the infant Church. The first Christians were regarded as a self-willed party within the Jewish community, introducing elements of division by their free-thinking, which to the orthodox seemed blasphemous. Paul claims that they held the same Scriptures, and maintained the same hope of a resurrection, but that they had in Christ the New and Living 'Way,' at once the means of access to that Life of which He was the Prophet, and a pledge of its reality in that He had risen again.

Christianity was a Life

It is noteworthy that even here in Palestine, where the 'Writings' had emerged so much more distinctly than elsewhere, the Law and the Prophets are alone specified. It is significant

of what we have already seen, that, in general, the rest of the books did not yet stand out very prominently from much of the religious writing of the time. But it is the emphasis laid on a particular aspect of the new religion by this name 'Way' that calls for remark. Christianity was not yet a Doctrine. It was not yet what it became later, a History. It was a Life; a Way of living, and the Way to Life. Its leaders, and with them the rank and file of believers, were too busy preaching the Way to find time or inclination to write much about it. They believed —how intensely, such passages as Jas. v. 7 and 8; 1 Thess. iv. 15; v. 23; 1 Cor. xv. 23; John xxi. 22 and 23 will show—that in their own generation their Lord would re-appear in the clouds to resume His reign upon earth, over the redeemed Kingdom of Israel. Their duty was clear. They must persuade as many as the shortness of the time permitted to accept this Way in order that they might share the glory of the coming Age. The present Age was fast nearing its end. What need was there for books? They had the living voice, and the energies of the Apostolate at first sufficed, with those of their immediate disciples and helpers, to supply at least occasional personal ministry to most of the Churches or groups of Churches in the Empire.

As we have seen, the first converts were won in many cases from the ranks of Judaism. For a time they still retained, particularly in

Palestine, their connexion with the faith of their fathers. They worshipped in Temple or Synagogue on the Sabbath, and their beloved Scriptures formed the central feature of their liturgy. On the following, or First Day, they met in such places as they could command, for their own special worship: 'the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers.' Here they would doubtless follow some similar order of service, so far, at any rate, as to read the sacred Scriptures. There are still extant copies of the ancient Lectionaries of the Church in which the two sets of lessons are marked, those for the Sabbath and those for the Sunday. Then, having heard the Scriptures read, and perhaps expounded in synagogue fashion, and having engaged in the prayers, they would listen while some Apostle or other authorized person narrated the story of their Lord's Life and Teaching. In many gatherings there would be no such leader to give them first-hand the traditional teaching. On such occasions it would be repeated from memory of what had been heard previously. Here and there, also, there would be some letter from an Apostle to be read to the Church in answer to specific inquiries which had been addressed to him, or in further elaboration of earlier teaching, or, occasionally, a letter sent to a whole group of Churches or to the Church in general. Now and then a Church

The Church and Judaism

would borrow, or obtain a copy of, a letter sent to a neighbouring community, and this would form the staple material for their discussion for a few Sundays.

By degrees, however, they were cut off from the consolations of their ancient ritual. The growing hostility of the stricter Jews, the increasing predominance of the Gentile element, and the knowledge that they were called to come out from among their old companions for the sake of completer testimony, all operated to sever them from the synagogue worship. Now they had to supply for themselves the essentials of their liturgy. For some time they seem to have maintained the two days for worship with the two sets of Scripture lessons, but a serious difficulty must soon have presented itself to them. These banned and persecuted bodies of Christians would find it increasingly difficult to possess themselves of copies of the ancient Scriptures. It may be questioned whether the smaller and poorer synagogues everywhere possessed all the sacred rolls. Those of the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms, with possibly, here and there, the five Megilloth or anniversary rolls, they would have. Be this as it may, it can scarcely be doubted that the hatred of the Jews and the poverty of the Christians would militate against the possession by the latter of any considerable

Gradual severance of the Church from Judiasm

portions of the Hebrew Scriptures. Moreover, they would find very few among themselves who were skilled to interpret what they were able to procure. The Greek version, or LXX., was obtainable, and must have been in very general use from the first, with its larger accumulation of heterogeneous writings, for acquaintance with it is assumed by more than one of the New Testament writers on the part of those to whom he writes.

All this would necessarily abbreviate the reading and study of the Old Testament in many Christian communities. Such deprivation would, in some measure, be compensated as long as they had the visits of the Apostles, or where they could procure their letters. But we must now take into account another very serious matter. The letters were by no means numerous, and their authors were growing fewer. What were they to do? Where were they to look for the instruction and encouragement of which they stood in so much need?

The Outcome of a Failing Hope

Time was passing, and decade followed decade while their Lord still delayed His looked-for coming. Leader after leader had passed into the silence of the unexpected tomb. The Church began to feel something of the sickness of hope deferred. Was it all a dream? Some of the better educated among them began to write down what they could remember

of the teaching of the Apostles. By degrees this had grown to something like uniformity, both as to what it included and as to what it omitted of the rich stores of incident and teaching of our Lord's earthly ministry. Churches needed some summary of the Apostolic Tradition for the instruction of candidates for baptism. Many wanted something of the kind for their own private and public worship. The demand created the supply. In a very real sense the written gospel was the result of a failing hope. An orphaned Church woke up to the fact that if she would possess any permanent record of the contents of the Apostolic teaching with which to supplement and correct her own imperfect memories of it, she must take speedy steps to secure it. She was being fast left to her own resources, though she hardly realized how greatly the Holy Spirit was using them for her own benefit and that of future ages. Being thus led to count up the extent of such resources, she found that they were not inconsiderable.

In the opening words of his Gospel Luke speaks of 'many' as having 'taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word' (Luke i. 1 f.). It is sufficient for our present purpose to note that these words imply the existence of several attempts to record some

portions of the oral teaching of various Apostles. Tradition states, and recent investigation confirms the statement, that among these documents was one which consisted of a collection of the sayings of Jesus—hence the name by which it is generally known to us, 'The Logia of Jesus.' This was probably written in Aramaic, the Palestinian vernacular of our Lord's time. Other documents undoubtedly existed by the middle of the sixth decade, which gave accounts of many of the doings of our Lord. When it became evident that the preaching of the Apostles was drawing to an inevitable close, an authoritative attempt was made to embody the outlines of their teaching, and the first Gospel, that known by the name of Mark, was issued. A fairly early tradition states that this Gospel owes much in form and matter to the influence of Peter, and there seems little reason for doubting this. Later, a fuller account was compiled from either this Gospel or its original sources and the 'Logia' (which the same authority attributes to Matthew), and the result of this compilation was the Gospel which we now know as Matthew's. Then a few years later still, Luke took in hand the labour of working carefully over the whole ground, and gave us his Gospel, which reflects the influence of Paul as Mark's does that of Peter. John's Gospel takes us to another period of history and

The Beginnings of the Gospels

other circumstances unconnected altogether with the oral tradition. It was written at the end of the first century for the purpose of combating a philosophical heresy which was then threatening the Church, and was only very indirectly related to the writings which are now occupying our attention. Leaving out of account for the moment John's Gospel as thus belonging to other conditions we may say that by the time the Apostles had practically done their work the Church possessed the Gospels as we know them.

We have already seen that the first of our New Testament books to come into the hands of the infant Church in their present form were some of the epistles. In all probability the earliest of those now extant was Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians in evident reply to inquiries addressed to him. It is possible however, that James wrote his general epistle to the Church still earlier. Then came other letters of advice, reproof, further teaching, tender inquiry and formal doctrinal character from Paul to Churches and individuals, extending over the whole period of his ministry; while four or five other writers contributed to the Church's enrichment. These various writings were sent to widely separated cities of the Roman Empire—Thessalonica, Corinth, Philippi, Ephesus, the Churches of Galatia, Colossae, Rome. There is an indication in 1 Cor. v. 9 that Paul wrote at

The Origin of the Epistles

least one other letter which has been lost, and we may infer the possibility of his having written some letters of which we have lost trace altogether. These epistles would be read and discussed by the members of the local Church, and lent to neighbouring communities, and then, having served their purpose, would disappear through inevitable wear and tear. There is no self-consciousness in them of any peculiarly sacrosanct nature. Their writers speak with authority as the servants of God, but we look in vain for any consciousness that they are contributing to a 'Bible.'

Liturgical use of the New Testament Books

We have seen how the little excommunicated groups of Christians found it difficult to supply the scriptures they required. When, after the lapse of years, the Apostolic visits became scarce and they had to fall back on the written records of the once preached gospel, it is not difficult to conceive how the reading of the latter would slowly but surely take the place of the missing Old Testament. By degrees the Christians would come to recognize in these new writings an invaluable guide amid the perplexities of life. We can imagine the gradual spread in Macedonia, for instance, of copies of the Thessalonian and Philippian letters, while the Corinthian epistles would circulate in Achaia and other sections of Greece proper. We can picture to ourselves the delight with which the

Corinthians would greet the first copy of the Ephesian letter brought over by some travelled merchant member of their community. They would read and ponder it and in return send copies of their own possessions to Ephesus. Thus in the course of a few years small but different groups of letters would come to be kept together in various centres of Christian activity. Gradually these groups would be extended until over large areas they were fairly uniform, and little informal and more or less local canons would come into existence through continued approval and usage. The sacred nature of their subject-matter and their normative character at last won for them a position of recognized equality with the once isolated and idolized Scriptures of the Law and the Prophets.

CHAPTER IV

THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS

THE writings of the first century were, for the most part, neither numerous nor lengthy, to judge by those which have come down to us. It is very clear that the immediate followers of the Apostles esteemed it their duty rather to teach verbally as the active missionaries of the Cross than to write. One, perhaps the chief, reason for this has been pointed out in the last chapter, and the gradual development of writing has also been accounted for. Thus arose the books which we now call the New Testament. But even before the end of the first century a few important writings were produced in whose pages we may look for evidence of the existence of these Apostolic books. In this connexion let us carefully bear in mind what was said on page 14. Only rarely shall we find such accuracy of citation as is beyond all cavil. But we shall find reasonable evidence in the language of the writers whose work will come under review that they have in their thought this or that book of one or other of the Apostles.

Clement of Rome

The first book to which we turn is one of considerable interest and of no little literary and religious value. It is known as the *Epistle of Clement.* Many traditions gather round the name and figure of Clement of Rome, and his life-story is so mixed up with legendary matter that it is not easy to disentangle fact from fiction in detail. It seems safe, however, to say that during the latter half of the first century there lived in Rome a prominent disciple of both Peter and Paul, whose strength of character, depth of spirituality and high intelligence raised him to the highest Church offices. He was early made the principal character in the first Christian romance, the Clementine Homilies and Recognitions, and this has confused the outlines of his historic personality. Besides this romance, the earliest law books of the Church, the Apostolic Canons and Constitutions, were, for a long time, attributed to him, and he is credited, probably with justice, with being the first legislator of the growing Church. He is acknowledged to be the mediator between various more or less disparate sections of the first Christians. Two Greek epistles are also attributed to Clement, of which one is really a fragment of a homily and is spurious, while the longer one, the Epistle to the Corinthians, is unquestionably genuine. The author is so completely merged in the Church in whose name he writes that we may say that this

Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians

is an epistle from the Church in Rome to the Church in Corinth. It was written about 95 A.D. It reveals just that development of doctrine and organization that we might expect to find at this distance of time from the first preaching of the Apostles. The high esteem in which Clement was held is shown by the fact that both these epistles are found appended to the canonical books in one of the earliest manuscripts of the Bible, while very early tradition mentions him as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and even of the Book of Acts.

When we come to read this Epistle to the Corinthians we see the fusion of the two elements of teaching which are generally connected with the names of Paul and James. We find proof of the existence of a definite constitution and fixed and ordered service in the Churches, and the presence of the various types of doctrine which sprang from the diverse elements which were present in the first composition of the Church, but harmonized and treated as complementary aspects of the truth. Not one Apostle, nor one group of books only, but all are evidently at the back of his mind and regarded as familiar to his readers, and this without trace of design or ulterior motive. The following quotations will serve at once to demonstrate this impartiality and his method of reference : ' Through faith and hospitality a son was given to Abraham in old age, and through obedience he offered him a

sacrifice to God.' 'Through faith and hospitality Rahab was saved.' 'We are justified, not by ourselves . . . nor through the works that we have done in holiness of heart, but by faith, by which all men from the beginning have been justified by Almighty God.' Nobody can miss the Pauline tenor of these free references, nor the spirit of James in this: 'Let us work with all our strength the work of righteousness.' In the same way John is evidently the inspirer of such passages as: 'Let us look steadfastly to the blood of Christ . . . which brought to the whole world the grace of repentance.' 'Through Him we look steadfastly to the heights of the heavens: through Him we behold as in a glass the immaculate and lofty countenance of God the Father: through Him the eyes of our heart were opened: through Him our foolish and darkened understanding—like a flower in a sunless cavern—springeth again to His marvellous light.'

The Epistle to the Hebrews is a constant source of suggestion, of which the following is a fair sample: 'Through Him the Lord willed us to taste of immortal knowledge, who, being the brightness of His glory, is so much better than the angels as He hath, by inheritance, obtained a more excellent name than they.' This is coming very near to the actual words of the book evidently referred to. A few other passages will show a working acquaintance with others of our New

Testament writings. Who, for instance, can doubt that Ephesians and 1 Corinthians are behind this: 'Have we not one God and one Christ? Is not the Spirit of grace which was poured out upon us one? Is not our calling one in Christ?' Or the first chapter of Romans underlies Clement's words: 'Casting from ourselves all unrighteousness and lawlessness, covetousness and strife, malice and fraud, whispering and evil-speaking, hatred of God, pride and insolence, vainglory and churlishness. For they who do these things are hateful to God; and not only they who do them, but also they who have pleasure in them that do them.' Still more pointed is an allusion to 1 Corinthians: 'Take up into your hands the Epistle of the blessed Apostle Paul. What did he first write to you in the beginning of his gospel? Of a truth, he warned you spiritually in a letter concerning himself and Cephas and Apollos, because even then there were factions among you.'

Leaving the question of the gospels for the time, what do we gather from this? Surely that already the Church had recognized a certain body of truth universally, and was accustomed to regard the writings of the Apostles as authoritative expositions of that truth. It is also evident that even such important personages as Clement do not regard themselves as on the same level of authority as those whom they quote in support

of their arguments. At the same time, Clement makes use of other writings, sometimes prefacing his reference with the words 'it is written,' which are not now looked upon as canonical—some are not now even identifiable.

Very much the same may be said of the writings of the next author to whom we turn, Ignatius, the martyred bishop of Antioch, who thus represents Eastern, as Clement did Western Christendom. He was put to death between the years 107 and 117, and on his way to Rome and martyrdom he wrote seven letters addressed to the Christians in Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles, Rome, Philadelphia and Smyrna, and to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. Again we are struck with the evidence of just such normal development of the work and teaching of the Apostles as we noticed in Clement's letter, but there emerges in Ignatius' epistles the word 'catholic' as applied both to the Church generally and to the particular Church of the now universal type. The universality of doctrine which was noticeable in Clement becomes catholicity in the fullest sense of the word in Ignatius. There is very much to interest us in these letters, but we must pass on and confine ourselves to their relation to the Canon. It is natural to find little or no direct quotation in letters written under such peculiar circumstances as these. Even were such accuracy in citation usual—and we have seen that it was

The Epistles of Ignatius

not—the hurry and disturbance of travel would preclude the possibility of it in this case. But we are impressed again, as we read, by the fact that Ignatius had saturated his mind with the thought and the diction of the Apostolic writings, and particularly those of Paul. The very fact that we can so clearly trace back the substance of his teaching to the Apostles—teaching which he seems to expect to be accepted without question by his readers—is ample proof that their writings were generally acknowledged to have unique authority in the Church of the East as we have already seen them to have had in the West. At the same time, John's influence is very marked, though rather as showing a general acquaintance on the part of Ignatius with Johannine modes of thought than as demonstrating conclusively that he was intimate with the Johannine literature, as may be seen from his epistles: 'Faith is the beginning, and love the end of life.' 'Faith is your guide (lit. pulley), and love the way that conducts you to God.' 'Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the Word by whom God manifests Himself' to men. He is 'the door of the Father.' 'The Spirit, being of God, is not deceived; for He knoweth whence He cometh and whither He goeth, and He searcheth out hidden things.'

One of the Epistles of Ignatius was addressed to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. He was born about the year 69 A.D., and was burned at

Polycarp and his Epistle

Smyrna in 155. His life thus connects the Apostolic age with the second period very closely, for there is strong reason to believe that he was a disciple of the Apostle John, while he, in turn, had as disciple Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons in Gaul. Irenaeus was born in Asia Minor and lived until 202. He is one of our greatest authorities on matters of Church life, doctrine, and history. We shall have more to do with him subsequently.

Polycarp wrote an epistle to the Philippians in answer to a request from them and Ignatius that he would forward to them the latter's epistles. He speaks of their having sent some epistles for dispatch to Syria, and he also states that with the Ignatian letter to Smyrna he is forwarding 'others, as many as we have with us.' This illustrates the process by which the writings, Apostolic and other, of those days were gradually disseminated throughout the Churches.

Turning to the substance of Polycarp's epistle we find it full of New Testament language. Paul, Peter, and John are all reflected in its lofty diction, but only once is any specific mark of quotation used, when he says: 'For I trust that you are well exercised in the Holy Scriptures, and nothing escapes you; but to me it is not at present granted. As it has been said in these Scriptures, Be ye angry and sin not, let not the sun go down upon your wrath.' We seem here to be well within the period at which Apostolic writings

began to be considered as having a sanctity commensurate with that of the Scriptures of the Old Testament. This is less than a century after the appearance of the first of the New Testament writings.

In addition to the three chief Apostolic Fathers so far dealt with, it is customary to include in this category three others—the author of the *Epistle of Barnabas*, Hermas, and Papias. It will be more convenient to take the last-named as belonging to the next period, and here we will only concern ourselves briefly with the first two. From the earliest times the *Epistle of Barnabas* was held in such high esteem that it is found in one of the most ancient MSS. of the Greek Bible, and seemed to bid fair for a position among the canonical books. Even after this was denied to it, it was long read among the apocryphal Scriptures. This may be accounted for by its bearing the name of Barnabas, whom several early authorities mistakenly identified with the fellow-labourer of Paul. Internal evidence is, however, against this. Reference is made to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the substitution of the Christian 'Lord's Day' for the old Jewish Sabbath is evidently accepted as an accomplished fact. This makes it very certain that it belongs to the second century. The chief interest of this epistle lies in the fact that in it occurs the first distinct instance of quotation from a New

The Epistle of Barnabas

Testament book as from Holy Scripture. The writer uses the technical formula, 'it is written' to introduce the words 'Many of us are called but few chosen,' from Matt. xxii. 14. On the other hand, he has words of Jesus which are not found in any of our Gospels.

The Shepherd of Hermas

In the *Shepherd* of Hermas we have an Apocalypse rather than an epistle or a treatise. There is good reason to believe that this work must be dated a few years later than the Apostolic period, though it is worthy of note that for a long time it was closely associated with the undoubtedly Apostolic writings, and seemed, like the *Epistle of Barnabas*, to be a likely candidate for canonical rank. This work consists of three parts, viz. (*a*) Four Visions given to Hermas near Rome, in which the Church is represented successively as an aged matron, a tower, and a virgin; (*b*) Twelve Commandments, given him by an angel in the likeness of a shepherd; and (*c*) Ten Similitudes or Parables, in which the Church appears again as a building. As the whole purports to be a direct revelation, there is no distinct quotation from either Testament, though the phraseology is strongly reminiscent of the Bible. Our Lord's words are frequently paraphrased in such wise as to demonstrate the author's acquaintance with some record of them, and the probability that the source was our Gospels is enhanced by the absence of any

reference to apocryphal narratives. Paul, Peter, James, and John have manifestly shaped his ideas and his diction, though he has stamped his own personality on all his work.

We are now in a position to review our field of study thus far, and summarize our findings. We have looked at the works of five authors who lived in the period immediately subsequent to the time of the Apostles, and in some cases there was actual personal contact between the latter and the former. That being so, the later writers would quite naturally defer to the higher authority of the Apostles, which is what we uniformly find wherever they make reference to them. In this fact, and the normative character of the Apostolic writings, lies the first beginning of the Canon. By the end of the first century, at the latest, the bulk of our New Testament books would have been circulated pretty well throughout the area of the Roman Empire, that is, throughout the extent of Christendom in that day. It was still the custom to appeal to what they remembered of the actual teaching of the Apostles by word of mouth rather than to make any extensive or frequent appeal to their writings, and this for obvious reasons. But the times were rapidly changing, and with them the habits of the Churches. Apostolic visits were perforce replaced by the re-reading of Apostolic and other letters, and to these, by sure degrees, more and

Summary of Results

more complete and habitual reference came to be made. A careful examination of the five authors mentioned above reveals clear evidence of an intimate acquaintance on their part with Paul's letters to the Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and 1 and 2 Timothy, the Epistle to the Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, and 1 John, while there is not a little reason to believe that allusions are also made to 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Titus, Philemon, and 2 Peter.

The question of allusions to the Gospels as we have them has been purposely left until this point for treatment. The whole problem of the origin of the four evangelic narratives lies beyond the scope of this manual, and it will suffice for our present purpose to premise that for some considerable time the substance of the gospel story and of our Lord's teaching would be repeated verbally, until the very forms of expression would tend to become well-nigh stereotyped over large areas. This fact in itself provided a safeguard against any intrusion of imaginary and invented matter. It was not until some decades had passed and the Apostolic band was dwindling that this oral tradition was committed to writing. When, therefore, we come across references to our Lord's acts or words in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, we cannot feel sure that they

Uncertainty of Early Evangelic Allusions

are making use of the written Gospel. The wording of their evangelic allusions exhibits as free treatment as is shown in their references to the epistles, and there is only very uncertain presumptive evidence that it is to our Gospels that they turned. However, in the quotation in the *Epistle of Barnabas* mentioned above, we seem to have a definite instance of the use of Matthew's Gospel, and thus this epistle affords us a distinct step of advance towards the establishment of the usage of evangelic documents and the further emergence of the idea of the Canon.

Rome, Antioch, Ephesus, Alexandria, four important centres of the early Church, all combine to give us a picture of a Christianity catholic from the first. In doctrine, in practice, in their possession of the facts of gospel narrative and the substance of the Apostolic letters, in recognition of the fitness of a canon and its appropriate limits, their testimony before the middle of the second century of our era is harmonious.

CHAPTER V

THE POST-APOSTOLIC PERIOD

WE have now travelled some distance into the second century, and we have good reason to believe that over a considerable area of Christendom the books of our New Testament were in fairly general use. It will have been noticed, however, that so far Palestinian Christianity has contributed nothing to our knowledge. Conservatism was the dominant quality of that Church, and very early we note the emergence of a type of Christianity which was extremely legalistic and Jewish. After the destruction of Jerusalem this section of the Church separated from the rest, and the 'Ebionim' (or poor), as they called themselves, degenerated into a heretical sect which did not long survive.

The 'Didache,' or 'Teaching of the Twelve Apostles'

Yet, strange to say, we derive our first Apologists of the Faith from Palestinian sources, and one of the most remarkable books of these early times also originated in Palestinian circles. *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* was only re-

covered so recently as 1875, and published in 1883. It was discovered in Constantinople by a Greek ecclesiastic and scholar, Bryennios, in a manuscript of the eleventh century, and very few discoveries of late years have added so much to our knowledge of the early Church. In the form in which it comes to us, it may be dated at about 120, but it incorporates an early Jewish-Christian work, entitled *The Two Ways*, which in its turn seems to have been based upon the oral instruction given in Jewish circles to Gentile proselytes. It thus carries us back to, say, the year 70. Much use is made of this older portion by the Apostolic and post-Apostolic writers, and it certainly reflects with great fidelity very early Christian usage. Its value for us lies in its attitude to the various components of our Bible. There is no indication that anything but the Old Testament was regarded as Scripture, but there are upwards of a score of more or less free quotations from New Testament books, many of them evidently from Matthew's Gospel, or compounded from Matthew's and Luke's. There is a rendering of the Lord's Prayer which strongly suggests oral tradition rather than dependence on any of the written forms known to us. The writer shows knowledge of most of our New Testament writings, and this is of importance when we assume, as we safely may, that this Christian handbook was very widely used in the decades immediately following the passing of the Apostles.

It summed up their teaching and gave permanent form to it, as the living instructors of the first age were growing scarcer.

Emergence of the Church from Obscurity

By the time that this book attained the form in which we now know it, Christianity had emerged from its earlier obscurity and security. It had begun to attract attention and to meet with opposition and hostility in writing and in act. It became necessary for the Church to meet and, if possible, to satisfy the new demands. In particular, Christianity was no longer looked upon as a peculiar development of Judaism, nor, as we have seen, was the remnant of Judaistic tendency within her borders any longer able to pose as orthodox. But it is distinctly worthy of note that we owe to this Jewish element Papias, the earliest commentator (to whom reference has already been made), and two of the earliest Apologists, Justin Martyr and Hegesippus.

Papias and his Books

We are only acquainted with the writings of this Father through the industry of Eusebius, a historian of the fourth century, who has preserved in quotations several important statements of Papias and other writers. Born about A.D. 80, in the Phrygian city of Hierapolis, and probably a heathen in his early life, Papias became bishop of his native city. He was, as a young man, a friend of Polycarp, and he may

very possibly have known some members of the Apostolic circle, as, for instance, John, though it is more probable that it was John the Presbyter and not the Apostle whom he knew. He wrote in five books *An Exposition of Oracles of the Lord*, which work seems to have remained extant as late as the thirteenth century. He evidently had no intention of writing anything approaching what we understand as a gospel, but rather a commentary on whatever he could gather from the lips of authoritative persons as having been uttered by the Lord. He says: 'Moreover I shall not hesitate to weave together with my explanations such things as I rightly learned from the elders and kept in memory, since I am convinced of their truth. . . . For I did not account the things from the books as of so much use to me as those from a living voice.' These words are proof of his attitude and purpose, and his testimony is of particular value to us as having reference to the Gospels, of which we have heard the least so far. In this connexion he says: 'Matthew compiled the Oracles in Hebrew; but each one interpreted them as he was able. . . . This also the Elder (John) used to say: Mark having become Peter's interpreter wrote accurately all that Peter mentioned, though he did not record in order that which was either said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed Him; but subsequently, as I said, attached himself to

Peter, who used to frame his teachings to meet the wants of his hearers; and not as making a connected narrative of the Lord's discourses. So Mark committed no error, as he wrote down some particulars as he related them; for he took heed to one thing—to omit nothing of what he heard, and to state nothing falsely in his record.'

His Connexion with the Apostolic Church

We need not go into the question of the origins of the Gospels which these quotations open up. It is clear from them that there were written Gospels when Papias wrote; that they were matters of considerable interest to a great many people; and that they corresponded with the preached gospel as that was known over the whole area of the Church. Now, all this evidence becomes more valuable to us in view of the strong Judaistic tendencies and sympathies of Papias. We should also give due weight to his position as a link between the first age and the new era. He had possibly heard John the Apostle, and, as we have seen, he probably knew John the Presbyter, who also lived and died at Ephesus. Then Philip the Evangelist, with his four prophesying virgin daughters, had settled in Hierapolis. They had, many years before, entertained Paul in their home at Caesarea; and now, in their later home, Papias gets to know them. It is of importance to note that he does not appear to have mentioned the Epistles of Paul in his *Expositions*. The

first Epistles of John and of Peter, and the Apocalypse he refers to as divinely inspired, but it is not remarkable that one of his school of thought should not have made use of Paul's letters. No serious argument against their general use at this time can, however, be derived from his silence, and the friendship just mentioned would guarantee his cognisance of them.

We may most conveniently notice here our indebtedness to the Greek Apologists of this age, amongst whose works the only one which need detain us is the *Letter to Diognetus*. This is an anonymous essay rather than an epistle, possibly addressed to the tutor of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, and consisting of an unquestionably genuine first part by a Greek Christian, and of a later second part whose style, subject-matter, and outlook differentiate it markedly from the earlier and point to an Alexandrian source. The whole composition must be placed within the first half of the second century. Its author speaks of himself as a disciple of the Apostles. He clearly combines the teaching of Paul and John in phrases manifestly borrowed from the Fourth Gospel and Paul's Epistles. He seems familiar with the language of the Synoptists, though he makes no specific reference to them. It is clear that an authoritative character is attributed by him to Acts,

The Letter to Diognetus

Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, 1 Timothy, Titus, and 1 Peter, all of which reveal their influence in the first part, while several of them are also traceable in the second.

Papias was deeply tinged with the strange Jewish cast of thought of the early age, but there was another convert to Christianity who had come to the Church by way of Judaism, who was destined to make a lasting impress on the thought of the growing Church. This notable man, called Justin the Martyr, was of Greek descent, but was born, about A.D. 100, in the town of Flavia Neapolis (Nablous), built by the Emperor Vespasian on the site of the ancient Samaritan city of Sychar or Sichem. He has left a remarkable account of his self-imposed search after the true philosophy. He first applied to a Stoic, who soon disappointed him by telling him that the knowledge of God was unnecessary. He then went to a Peripatetic, who disgusted him by revealing a very early and mercenary anxiety about his fees. From him he passed to a Pythagorean, who required in his pupils as a preliminary qualification a knowledge of Astronomy, Music, and Geometry. His last step on his own responsibility was to put himself under the teaching of a Platonist, who gave him some hope that he was drawing near to his goal, when, one day, as he was walking on the seashore in solitary communings, he was accosted by an

Justin Martyr

aged, meek, and venerable man who pointed him from Plato to Christ. Justin says: 'At once my soul took fire, and I was seized by a love for the prophets and those men who are the friends of Christ. And as I turned over his words in my heart I found Christianity to be the only philosophy that is sure and suited to man's wants. Thus and therefore am I a philosopher.' He began at once to travel, an eager missionary of the newly-found faith, and he added to his labours those of a voluminous author. Three of his undoubted works survive—two Apologies addressed to the heathen world, and a Dialogue with the Jew Trypho, in which he is concerned with the argument from the ancient Scriptures in support of the Messiahship of Christ. These works are of such importance for our purpose that we must look at them in detail.

His two Apologies and Dialogue

All three works were probably written before 154, the Apologies perhaps about 150, and the Dialogue soon after. Justin was beheaded in Rome in 165 or 166, in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, to whom he had addressed his Apologies. The custom was not yet common of speaking of the writings containing the Life and Words of Christ as gospels. When Justin refers to them he uses such terms as would appeal to Greeks acquainted with the works of Xenophon. He calls them 'Memoirs,'

'Memoirs of the Apostles,' and, in one place, says 'Memoirs which are called Gospels.' This is the first instance known to us where the term 'gospels' is applied to *books*. He frequently speaks of the 'gospel,' but that no more means that he is thinking of some book now lost, or that there was only one in use, than would its use on our lips. There are copious evidences that he knew our Gospels, and that they were the only gospels regarded by him as of authority or recognized in that light by the Church, whether Eastern or Western. For instance, immediately after referring to 'Memoirs composed by the Apostles of Christ, and those who followed them,' he quotes a passage only found in Luke. Again, he speaks of 'Peter's Memoirs,' and quotes one of the few passages peculiar to Mark. A careful collation of his references shows that the books he quotes held the same contents as ours, and he even takes the trouble, when he introduces matter from other sources, to distinguish it from that which can claim Apostolic sanction.

Free Style of Quotation

His style of quotation is free and far from accurate. But it is appropriate to his purpose. In his Apologies he is giving a summary of Christ's history and teaching for the benefit of heathen readers. In his Dialogue, he is concerned to prove to his Jewish opponent how Christ fulfilled Old Testament prophecy, and it is noticeable that his quotations

from the Old Testament are just as free as those from the New. A further point of importance in this connexion is to be found in the fact that when he quotes from the Septuagint passages which Paul has also cited, he agrees with Paul rather than with the original when there is any divergence. He seems so saturated with Pauline thought and diction that he naturally thinks of the Old Testament *through* Paul. His concern being mainly with prophecy, it is scarcely remarkable that he refers to the Apocalypse alone among the New Testament books other than the Gospels, as it is the one prophetic book among them. He says: 'Moreover also a man among us named John, one of the Apostles of Christ, prophesied in a revelation made to him that those who have believed on our Christ shall spend a thousand years in Jerusalem.' Finally, he tells us very suggestively in a description of the services of the early Church: 'On the day called the day of the Sun a gathering takes place of all who live in the towns or in the country in one place, and the memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the Prophets are read, so long as the time permits. Then the reader stops, and the leader impresses by word of mouth, and urges to imitation of, these good things.' It may be merely accidental that the memoirs here take precedence of the Old Testament, but the very accident is significant of much. The time is evidently drawing near when, to say the least,

the New Testament books will not be regarded as being on a lower level than the Old Testament Scriptures.

For the rest, Justin shows knowledge of John's Gospel, though by the very nature of the case it does not bulk so largely in these writings of his as the others. It provided him with less for his purpose than they did. So that we have proof that the Gospels, Paul, and the Apocalypse were known as books of supreme value to Justin, and that by the middle of the second century it was possible to quote them as authorities, even as 'Scripture.' This is a very important indication of the way in which real though quite unofficial canonization came about in the Churches.

We need not spend very long over the next two names, but they are useful as affording additional evidence of the catholicity of sentiment regarding the books of the New Testament. Hegesippus is probably the first considerable historian of the Church. He was of Palestinian origin, acquainted with the dialects of Syria, and well versed in the earliest intimate traditions of the Apostolic circles. He is very highly spoken of by Eusebius, who quotes at length from his five books of Memoirs. He journeyed widely and intelligently, visiting the bishoprics on his way to Rome *via* Corinth, and he reports that 'in each bishopric and in each city things are as the law heralds and the prophets

Hegesippus the Historian

and the Lord.' Although the New Testament is not here specifically mentioned, this reference, taken in conjunction with the following, assures us that the Catholic Church was recognizing a Catholic and Apostolic literature of a normative type. The second quotation just adverted to is this : 'And he not only gives us some things from the Gospel according to the Hebrews, but also from the Syrian, and especially from the Hebrew, dialect, showing that he himself became a believer from among the Hebrews. And he refers to other things as if from a Jewish unwritten tradition . . . And speaking of the books called apocryphal, he related that some of them were falsely concocted in his times by some heretics.' This mention of the various sources from which Hegesippus derived his information, with its specific statement about apocryphal literature, is sufficient warrant for the belief that the references to the recognized books of the New Testament as it existed in the time of Eusebius satisfied him, and that he is here only calling attention to the unusual in Hegesippus.

While dealing with Clement of Rome in Chapter IV, mention was made of a so-called *Second Epistle of Clement*. While it is quite impossible to attribute this document, which is a homily and not an epistle, to him whose name it usually bears, it is still of value to us as bearing testimony from the middle of the second century to the fact that the Apostolic writings were taking a

position of collective importance. This is clearly shown in the following words: 'The books and the Apostles say the Church is not a thing of to-day but comes from the past.' Here the Books are the Old Testament and the Apostles are at least a nucleus of what is to become the New.

The Second Epistle of Clement

Melito, who was mentioned at the end of Chapter II, wrote an Apology to Marcus Aurelius in the year 176, and had written much before that time. He had been commissioned by Onesimus, a fellow Christian, to compile a sort of Introduction to the study of the Scriptures. For this purpose he undertook a journey to Palestine to learn which books were there looked upon as Scripture. He writes to Onesimus: 'Having gone therefore to the East and reached the spot where each thing was preached and came to pass, and having learned exactly the books of the Old Testament, I have sent a list of them.' Now that gives us much. The mention of an Old Testament implies a New. We have no evidence in Melito's writings as to which books they were which he regarded as composing this New Testament, but his words with their inevitable indication take us a long step towards our goal.

Melito and His Journey

The list for which we vainly look in Melito's report is to our hand in a remarkable fragment

of a manuscript discovered early in the eighteenth century by the Italian librarian Muratori in the Ambrosian library at Milan. It is part of a seventh or eighth century translation into wretched Latin of a Greek work which was probably written not later than 170. The fragment contains part of a chatty catalogue of the books which were recognized as being what we to-day should call canonical. It has evidently suffered mutilation, and the first few lines are missing, as well as the conclusion. It begins with the words: 'Nevertheless he was present at some and thus put them down. The third book of the gospel is according to Luke: this is Luke the Physician,' and so on. There can be little doubt that the opening words refer to Mark, and that Matthew occupied the first place on the list. Then comes John, about whose Gospel there is added some interesting traditionary information, and a quotation from his First Epistle (not otherwise mentioned); then 'the Acts of all the Apostles'; after which are enumerated 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Romans, Philemon, Titus, 1 and 2 Timothy. At this point there are mentioned two epistles not now included in the New Testament, viz. 'An Epistle to the Laodiceans, another to the Alexandrians forged in Paul's name for the heresy of Marcion, and many others which cannot be

Muratori's 'Fragment'

received in the catholic Church, for it is not fitting to mingle gall with honey. The Epistle of Jude and two with the name of John are held in honour in the catholic Church, and Wisdom written by the friends of Solomon to his honour.' These words are very significant. It is evident that the catholic Church is now recognized as a tangible power, that its decisions of usage are acknowledged, but that as yet there are some books struggling for a place in the Canon which is eventually to be refused them. The fragment goes on to say: 'The Revelation of John and of Peter only we acknowledge, which (latter) some of us do not think should be read in Church.' A similar sentence is pronounced upon the *Shepherd* of Hermas, and the fragment concludes with some references to certain heretical books. It will be noticed that no mention is made of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Epistles of James and Peter. But the fragment is so corrupt, and there are such evident signs of *lacunae* in it, that these books, which were perhaps more likely to be read in the East than in the West (though we know that the Epistle to the Hebrews was known in Rome in the year 95), may have been included in the list as originally made out.

We have, perhaps, stretched the term Post-Apostolic to extreme lengths, but having reached this point it will be most convenient briefly to notice in this chapter the evidence afforded by two other witnesses at or about the end of the

third quarter of the second century. Dionysius was Bishop of Corinth at the time of Justin's martyrdom, and his many epistles to Churches throughout Asia Minor, Greece, Crete, and Rome itself, are evidence of the widespread intercourse between the Churches of that age. Dionysius is quoted by Eusebius as writing to Soter, Bishop of Rome: 'To-day was the Lord's Day, a holy day, and we read your letter from the reading of which from time to time we shall be able to derive admonition, as from the one formerly written to us by Clement.' Thus the habit mentioned by Justin of reading Christian writings in public worship is evidently general. The catholicity to which Dionysius witnesses is further demonstrated by his remarks on heretical attempts to corrupt the orthodox writings. He says: 'When brethren asked me to write letters I wrote them. And these the apostles of the devil have filled with tares, taking away some things and adding others, for whom the Woe is appointed. It is not strange then that some have tried to adulterate the Scriptures of the Lord, when they have formed the design of corrupting those which are not as these are.' This is evidence that the New Testament books were looked upon as a collection distinguished from others, and of such importance that they were corrupted for the purpose of bolstering up heresy.

Dionysius of Corinth and his Letters

We are also indebted to Eusebius for preserving for us some fragments of the writings of Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, though a heathen by birth. He had been converted by reading the 'sacred writings of the holy prophets,' whom he calls 'spirit-bearers of the Holy Spirit.' He gives the same title to John when quoting from the Fourth Gospel—the earliest extant quotation from St. John's Gospel by name. He refers to the same source 'The inspiration of the Law, and the Prophets and the Gospel,' and he makes clear use of passages from the four Evangelists (of whom he is said by Jerome to have published a harmony), Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Timothy, Titus, Hebrews, and 1 Peter, and the Apocalypse.

Theophilus of Antioch

CHAPTER VI

THE EARLY HERETICS

So far we have trodden the highway of orthodoxy, hedged by propriety and due observance of growingly catholic usage. More than once we have caught glimpses of other roads leading to peculiar conclusions out of harmony with those generally accepted. We have in this way reached the age when the Apologists stood forth in defence of the faith against heathen foes. Meanwhile, all has not been smooth going within the Church herself. We must, therefore, retrace our steps to consider the heresies and the evidence which they afford for our books. This will bring us by other routes to the Age of the Apologists, when we can resume our onward journey.

The Heresies and Their Testimony

A study of the heresies reveals one or two general principles which are of assistance. We find that the sects which arose from time to time during the long struggle of the first three centuries, all witness to the existence and catholic reception of our New Testament books. It is worthy of note that, while they questioned at one time or another well-nigh every article

of belief held by the Catholic Church, they one and all turn for confirmation of their tenets to the accepted Scriptures, whose position was historically secured. The Church was assailed from the Judaistic side, and had to combat Ebionism with its reactionary spirit. It was threatened from its Gentile side, and had to contend with Gnosticism, a strange and Protean admixture of philosophy and speculative Christianity, which at times was distinctly Ebionitic and at others almost frankly pagan in tone and temper. In support of these systems, many of them incredibly wild, different books were appealed to, and others rejected as hostile, but there is nowhere any attempt at historic justification for such rejections. From the first, while their use of our books is thus partial, they testify to the unique position held by them, and their testimony thus confirms the conclusions derived from the witness of orthodoxy.

We noticed in Chapter IV the tendency to idealize the typical Churchman in Clement until his figure becomes almost vague and certainly composite. Similar influences have been at work in the case of the first great heresiarch,

Simon Magus

Simon Magus, who appears in an early scene in the Apostolic history (*see* Acts viii.). He was a Samaritan astrologer from the town of Gittae, and a champion of Gnosticism. Menander was his best known pupil, and together they embodied

the Gentile opposition with which the first Church was confronted. We know little about either of them, though there is, as we have just seen, a considerable accretion of legendary matter, but to them may be accredited 'The Great Declaration,' from which account of the revelation which Simon professed to have received some extracts have been preserved for us in a work *Against Heresies*, probably written by Hippolytus, bishop of Portus, near Rome, early in the third century. In these there are coincidences with the language of Matthew's and John's Gospels. The first Epistle to the Corinthians is also referred to in terms which show that the author placed it on the same level of authority as the Old Testament. Simon and his school forged gospels to deceive Christians, and evidently recognized the beginnings of a New Testament. A forgery is always a gratuitous testimony to the value of the thing counterfeited. These men, therefore, testify to the fact that even then Christians appealed to the Apostolic writings as having peculiar weight.

Cerinthus the Jew

On the other hand, Cerinthus represents the Jewish forces of opposition to Christianity. Just as Simon is put in antithesis to the Apostle Peter, so John and Cerinthus are opposed by popular consent. The story is familiar to readers of Church history of John's running out of the public bath when he heard that Cerinthus was within, lest the building should fall upon such an enemy

of the truth. But Cerinthus opposed himself not only to John, but to Peter and to Paul. When, somewhat later, the Apocalypse became a subject of controversy, the characteristic qualities of his teaching led to the attribution to Cerinthus, by a curious freak of criticism, of this book, and, later still, the Johannine Epistles and the Gospel itself, which was probably written to counter Cerinthianism. Cerinthus shows familiarity with much of the New Testament, and reveals its importance at the close of the first century.

Within the boundaries of the Church itself there arose, as the result of contact with the philosophical schools, various sects, which, in some cases, became violently hostile to orthodoxy. Here we meet the first sect to adopt the name Gnostic. The Ophites, Naasenes, or Snake-Worshippers, held a system of doctrine which was the offspring of Greek speculative thought of the wildest order, combined with certain elements of Jewish and Christian teaching. They professed to have derived their doctrine through Mariamne from James, the Lord's brother; they are said to have required all who joined them to blaspheme Christ; they refer clearly in their books to the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John, the Epistles of Paul to the Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Galatians, and probably the Epistle to the

The Ophites, or Snake-Worshippers

Hebrews and the Apocalypse, while certain kindred sects refer also to Colossians and Philippians. A very similar heresy troubled the Colossian Church in Paul's time, while the Galatian Church was vexed by opponents of the other type, represented by the Ebionites, who insisted upon Judaistic observances as an essential part of the Christian life. Of necessity they rejected Paul and his writings, and they have left a very interesting relic of their doctrine in the book known as the *Clementine Homilies*. The chief value of this otherwise unimportant work lies in the fact that, though there are about eighty different references to the words of our Lord, there is nothing beyond two or three allusions which points to any other authority than those acknowledged by us. Thus we find a substantial agreement between the Gospels as we have them and what was known by the early Church of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ.

The Ebionites

Another heretical writer of whom Hippolytus tells us is an Alexandrian Jew, Basilides, who wrote twenty-four volumes on the New Testament. He lived not long after the time of the Apostles; he was junior to Cerinthus and a pupil of Menander. He is thus Polycarp's senior. The chief interest of his writings is that he quotes from the canonical Gospels and Epistles with the formula usually

Basilides and Carpocrates

applied to Old Testament books: 'it is written,' or 'about which the Scripture saith' (from Ephesians). He seems to know Matthew, and he certainly quotes from Luke, John, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians, and possibly 1 Timothy and 1 Peter. This appeal to our books as Scripture, explain it as one may, means much at so early a date.

Contemporary with Basilides is Carpocrates, also an Alexandrian, of whom we are told that he held 'Peter and Paul and the rest' as nowise inferior to Christ Himself. The point to note here is the catholicity which can place these two names together. Irenaeus tells us that the Carpocratians received our Gospels, though they distorted their teaching. He also says that they taught that 'men are saved by faith and love,' thus combining the teaching of Paul and John. Their neglect of the application of faith to actions seems to show a rejection of James.

Valentinus and his Gospel

Unlike Basilides, who claimed the authority of Peter for his teaching, Valentinus adduces Paul, and thus both unite to testify to the value of Apostolic sanction as sufficient warrant for doctrine. He was probably of Egyptian birth and Jewish training, and settled in Rome to teach. He is responsible for a bizarre speculative system of philosophy whose terms are evidently borrowed from John's Gospel. Tertullian (born 160) says that Valentinus used

the whole New Testament as then known, and that he did not reject the books, but altered the interpretation. Clement of Alexandria (flourished 189–202) tells us that Valentinus distinguished between what was written in the public books and what was written in the Church. The apparent significance of this distinction is that there were certain books which Jews and Gentiles alike might read, while others were only for Christians. That looks in the direction of a canon. So does the charge brought against the Valentinians of forging a new Gospel, especially when we find that it was doctrinal and not historical in character. The form and contents of Evangelic history were too well known to permit of any successful tampering. But the case was different when it came to expositions of doctrine. This Valentinian 'Gospel of Truth,' like two other Gnostic Gospels—the 'Gospel of Eve' and the 'Gospel of Perfection'—was a farrago of wild speculations on questions semi-religious and philosophical.

Heracleon, Ptolemaeus, and the Marcosians

Heracleon, a friend of Valentinus, has left a few fragments of the first commentary upon any New Testament writing. He seems to have published commentaries upon the Gospels of Luke and John, and the extant fragments contain allusions also to Matthew, Romans, 1 Corinthians, and 2 Timothy. It is evident that these writings were held in very

high regard; in fact, the inspiration of the Apostles and Evangelists is not more definitely proclaimed by Origen a century later than it is by the character of these comments of Heracleon. No difference is made in this particular between the Old and New Testaments. The very existence of commentaries is a striking testimony to the estimation in which the books treated were held.

A disciple of Valentinus, Ptolemaeus, who appears to have been the systematizer of Valentinianism, quotes from Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, and Colossians. In addition to these canonical books the Valentinians also quote from the *Preaching of Peter*, but it is not clear that they regarded it as Scripture. It is interesting to note that we can trace to Ptolemaeus the beliefs that our Lord's ministry was of a single year's duration, and that He continued for eighteen months after the Resurrection with His disciples.

Another Valentinian sect arose in Syria, called the Marcosians after their founder Marcus. They are remarkable for their output of apocryphal writings, for which indeed Syria had always been notorious. Irenaeus shows that these spurious writings were easily distinguishable from the true Scriptures. The Marcosians bear witness to the familiar use of our Gospels, though they strain the meaning of them, without, however,

tampering with the actual text. This is characteristic of all the heretical writings so far noticed.

Marcion was the son of a bishop of Sinope, in Paphlagonia, with whom he quarrelled. He went to Rome and quarrelled with the Church there and left it. Polycarp calls him 'Satan's first-born,' and he certainly seems to have been a stormy spirit. Somewhere about 144 he founded a Church of his own, and Churches of the Marcionite sect existed in Syria as late as the fifth century. For use in his own communion, and to justify his views, he made a selection of Apostolic writings, and thus makes his great contribution to our study in that he gives us our first clearly marked canon. It has been very pertinently noted that three 'first things' are due, not to writers within the Church, but to those without; the first quotation of a New Testament book as Scripture; the first Commentary on Apostolic writings; and the first Canon of the New Testament. It is evident that in these matters they cannot have created the Catholic view, even if they suggest it; they must have followed views already widely held.

Marcion and his Canon

Marcion accepted a modified form of Luke's Gospel, rejecting the others as not Pauline in teaching, and called that the 'Gospel,' while he called the other section of his canon the 'Apostolicon.' In this he included ten Pauline Epistles, rejecting the Pastorals and Hebrews. He teaches

us that up to his time there had been no recognized canon; that the Christian Church had learned to cling to their sacred books, so that they were able to repel so vigorous an attack upon them; and (from the attitude of his adversaries) that he was charged, not with attempting to impose something unacceptable upon them from without, but with tampering with, or straining the meaning of, that which was already acknowledged.

One other writer must occupy our attention under this heading. Tatian was an Assyrian, restless of spirit and impetuous of temper, educated in all the lore of Greek paganism, who came to Rome and became a Christian under the influence of Justin Martyr, whom he succeeded as teacher. Later he developed erratic views and returned to the East, where he became the leader of a strict sect who called themselves 'Encratites' or 'Self-Masterers,' and in this capacity combined Valentinian doctrine with Marcionitic practice. In a very real way he contributes to our study, for he wrote a Harmony of the Gospels called *Diatessaron*, literally, 'Through Four.' He begins it with the words from John's Gospel; and though there are omissions which may have been inspired by a controversial spirit, there is no evidence that he recognized any but our four Gospels. He added Titus to

Tatian and his Harmony of the Four Gospels

the Pauline writings which he followed Marcion in acknowledging.

The very success of Tatian's condensation of the Gospels is a proof of their acceptance over a wide area. It was in use in the early part of the third century in the Christian community of Edessa in Syria, and before the end of that century Ephrem Syrus wrote a Syriac commentary upon it, fragments of which have come down to us in Armenian. There is also an Arabic translation from the Syriac text, and a Latin version, which, however, does not very closely follow the earlier texts. Theodoret of Antioch, bishop of Cyrus on the Euphrates (423), tells us that he collected more than two hundred copies of the *Diatessaron*, which he replaced with copies of the Four Gospels. Nor is the testimony of these unorthodox writers to the other books less valuable, for it is evident that only that calls for rejection or repudiation which has gained some position of advantage, and such we have every reason to believe had been attained by practically all our New Testament writers by this time, with the one possible and partial exception of the second Epistle of Peter.

CHAPTER VII

THE CLOSE OF THE SECOND CENTURY

BEFORE we can review in its entirety the testimony of the first century-and-a-half of Christianity we must turn briefly to the one line of evidence that still remains untouched—that of the earliest versions or translations into the vernacular which were made for the use of those parts of the civilized world where Greek was not popularly spoken; and we must notice the witness borne also by three Fathers whose contemporary lives brought the second century to a close.

The Coming of the Versions

The oldest version known is that called the Peshito (meaning the 'simple,' that is, either the common or colloquial, or clear from allegorical admixture), made for the use of the Eastern Churches of Syria. In its original form this was a translation of the Bible into the ordinary dialect, the Aramaic, spoken in Palestine in Apostolic times. It is in this language that strong tradition states the original Gospel of Matthew to have been written, and this is

The Peshito or Syriac

the speech which is called 'Hebrew' in the New Testament.

Before the close of the Apostolic period, there were doubtless in use throughout the East, Syriac translations of most of the Apostolic and Evangelic writings, and there is no reason to suppose that the growth of an informal canon followed other lines in Syria than in the Greek-speaking parts of the world. That the Peshito is very old is certain, and the very uncertainty of its date of origin is a proof of its antiquity. There is evidence of its having been revised and compared with the Greek texts shortly after the close of the Apostolic Age, at Edessa in Mesopotamia, and there is an early tradition that the version itself was made in the reign of Abgarus, the King of Edessa, who is legendarily reputed to have sent a letter to Jesus offering Him sanctuary. The antiquity of the Peshito is further demonstrated by the fact that it is unanimously acknowledged by all the Syrian sects. This premises its existence ere they arose, and we know that divisions appeared early in the second century. We shall not be very far wrong in assigning it to the neighbourhood of 140, perhaps a few years earlier. No apocryphal books are found in the New Testament portion of this Old Syriac Bible, but there are missing from it 2 and 3 John, 2 Peter, Jude, and the Apocalypse.

The old Latin version sprang into being in North Africa, among the Roman settlements of

which Carthage was the chief, and not, as might naturally be expected, in Rome. Greek was the language of the classes from which the Italian Church was in the main recruited. The educated classes spoke Latin and Greek, but the latter was the common speech of everyday intercourse, and Epistles, Apologies, Sermons, and Liturgy were all in Greek, not only in Italy, but as far west as the Gallic Churches of Vienne and Lyons.

The Vetus Latina or Old Latin

But, in Africa, Latin was the vernacular. We know very little of the origin of the African Church, save that it was later than Apostolic times; but Tertullian, writing about 190, says that Christians then occupied positions of every rank in Carthage, whether in senate, forum, palace, or camp. Tertullian is our witness to the extreme antiquity of this old Latin version, for it had shaped the theological thought and speech of the time and was in popular use long before he wrote. He speaks of the Evangelical 'Instrument' (his term for Testament) as resting on Apostolic authority. There is reason to believe that it was made not later than 170, and that it arose, as did the Peshito, from the gradual collection of private translations of writings which made a growing claim upon the respect of the Churches.

In addition to its somewhat extended Old Testament Canon, based upon the Alexandrian,

it shows peculiarities in the composition of the New Testament. Hebrews, James, and 2 Peter seem to have been absent from its first form. The first of these was added later, probably without the author's name, though it may have been attributed to Barnabas, since Tertullian refers to it as bearing his name.

The strength of the argument from these versions lies in the fact that they represent the consensus of opinion of large groups of Churches rather than the mere judgements, however weighty, of individuals. Before a translation is made it must be demanded; before that demand can arise a need must be felt; and the sense of need and the reasonableness of the demand show that over a wide area the books involved were known to have some special value. There is no question now as to the sanctity of these writings. They have attained to the position of Scripture, and are associated in the minds of Christians universally with the Scriptures of the Old Testament. The only question still left to ask and answer is that which concerns the exact delimitations of this New Testament. Most of the books are everywhere assured a rightful place among the writings which are read in worship and studied in private as the norm and final appeal in matters of life and doctrine. But there are still a few about which there is not unanimity. Further evidence must still be taken.

Inferences from the Versions

We cannot, however, leave this portion of our investigation without making one generalization which is of importance. We have noticed how various parts of Christendom have manifested local peculiarities of canon. Here a teacher and there a Church has accepted a book which others have rejected. We have also seen the emergence of a Catholic Church, whose collective judgement, all the more irresistible for being largely unofficial and lacking formal expression, has ruled out all but the books which eventually found a permanent position in the esteem of the Church. The Canon has grown almost to its ultimate dimensions by the end of the second century, but it still remains incomplete. If the Syrian and Old Latin Canons be combined it will be found that the only book in our New Testament which is not recognized by either is the second Epistle of Peter. It is sufficient for our purpose simply to register the fact at this stage. We can examine it more fully when we come, in Chapter VIII, to the consideration of the disputed books.

Reference has been made more than once to Irenaeus and Tertullian. It is now necessary to consider these Fathers of the end of the second century, and if we add to them a third, Clement of Alexandria, we shall be able to survey practically the whole area then covered by the Church. Irenaeus comes into prominence in connexion

Irenaeus of Lyons

with the Gallican Churches at Lyons and Vienne. These were probably founded by missionaries from Asia Minor, and, as a young man, Irenaeus came thither from Smyrna, where he may have been born (though he is questionably reputed to have been a Syrian), and where he certainly spent some years of his youth. He was born about the year 135, and had known Polycarp at Smyrna. He is thus another link between the two ages. The Christians at Lyons and Vienne had suffered grievously in the persecution under Marcus Aurelius in 178 and 179, and we have among the documents preserved for us by the industry of Eusebius a letter describing this fiery trial, sent by the suffering Churches to those of Asia Minor, in which there is abundant evidence of the use of very much the same New Testament as ours. At the same time they sent by the hand of Irenaeus a letter to Rome. Their bishop, Pothinus, who perished at the age of more than ninety in this persecution, must have been born before the New Testament books had all been written, and this fact gives us a pledge of the continuity of the Apostolic tradition in Gaul. Irenaeus speaks for three great divisions of Christendom—Asia Minor, Rome, and Gaul—and thus his witness is really to a much more general continuity of teaching and practice than is found merely in Gaul. Had there been any sudden

The Continuity of Apostolic Tradition

intrusion of unauthorized books in any of these areas, or any violent changes affecting the reception of the books whose history we believe we have continuously traced thus far, he would certainly have apprised us of the fact. His appeal to the teaching of the Apostles, to the tradition of the Catholic doctrine from one teacher to another, and his quiet assumption of their unchallengeable authority in his frequent citation of, and allusion to, the Scriptures now so universally known, are a complete demonstration that the Canon had quietly and almost uniformly emerged as the result of a general sense of propriety. This conclusion is quite consistent with the discovery that Irenaeus makes no reference to James, 3 John, Jude, and 2 Peter. He does acknowledge the Apocalypse, however, as the work of John, and he seems to have known the Epistle to the Hebrews, though he does not regard it as Pauline. The omission of the little letter to Philemon is quite comprehensible when we remember its size and its absolutely non-doctrinal character. It has not appeared in quotation yet, but we shall find, when we come to sum up, that it had no difficulty in asserting its right to a place among Paul's letters. Perhaps the most interesting testimony of all in Irenaeus is his oft-quoted reference to the fourfoldness of the gospel. He concludes a minutely full account of the Gospels thus; 'But neither are there more gospels than these nor fewer. Since

there are four directions of the world, and four general winds, and the Church is dispersed through all the earth, and the pillar of the Church is the Gospel and Spirit of life, it is fitting that it should have four pillars.' He then goes on to compare the appearance of the four 'Cherubim' as he calls them (the four living creatures of Revelation) with the characteristics of the four Gospels. It is to Irenaeus that we are indebted for the stinging condemnation of the added Gospel of the Valentinians (to which reference has already been made), given in his great work, *A Refutation of Heresies.*

We know as little of the origin of the Egyptian Churches as of the Gallican, but tradition makes Mark the founder of the Church at Alexandria. Towards the close of the second century we find Pantaenus the director of the theological school there. Pantaenus is said to have visited India and to have found that Bartholomew had preceded him and had left behind him Matthew's Gospel in Hebrew. It is more than likely that he knew some of the disciples of the Apostles. Pantaenus was succeeded by his pupil Clement, who thus describes his own teachers in words which picture for us the free and widespread intercourse which took place among Christians in those days: 'Of these one was in Greece, the Ionian, and one in Southern Italy, another was from Syria, and one from

Clement of Alexandria

Egypt, and others throughout the East, where one was from the Assyrians, one in Palestine by origin a Hebrew, and meeting the last one (this one was the first in power), I stopped . . . But they, preserving the pure tradition of the blessed teaching directly from Peter and James, from John and Paul, of the holy Apostles, son receiving it from father (but few are they who are like their fathers), came by God's providence to us to sow those seeds which were derived from their ancestors and the Apostles.' Eusebius speaks of a work of Clement as follows: 'Clement in his *Outlines* has given concise explanations of all the "testamented" scriptures without omitting the disputed books: I mean the Epistle of Jude and the remaining Catholic Epistles, as well as the Epistle of Barnabas and the so-called Revelation of Peter. And moreover he says that the Epistle to the Hebrews is Paul's.' Then follows his reason for believing that Paul had a purpose in suppressing the fact of his authorship of a letter to a Jewish community.

To be brief, Clement gives us testimony in favour of all the New Testament books except James, 2 Peter, and 3 John, while he shows us that, though not on the same level as the others, there were still some books held in considerable esteem which are not now regarded as canonical.

We have already looked at the African Church, and mentioned its prominent Carthaginian lawyer

and Christian leader, Tertullian. Accustomed to the weighing of evidence, and to the presentation of facts, he stands out very clearly as a witness about those matters which are paramount for us in this inquiry. One lengthy excerpt will suffice to give us his judgement: 'If it is acknowledged that that is more true which is earlier, that earlier which is even from the beginning, that from the beginning which is from the Apostles; it will in like manner surely be agreed that that has been derived from the Apostles which has been preserved sacredly in the Churches of the Apostles. Let us see what milk the Corinthians drank from Paul; to what rule the Galatians were recalled by his reproofs; what is read by the Philippians, the Thessalonians, the Ephesians; what is the testimony of the Romans, who are nearest to us, to whom Peter and Paul left the gospel, and that sealed by their own blood. We have, moreover, Churches founded by John. For even if Marcion rejects his Apocalypse, still the succession of bishops' (that is of the seven Churches) 'if traced to its source will rest upon John as their founder. And the high birth of the rest is recognized. I say then that among them, and not only among the Apostolic Churches, but also among all the Churches which are confederated with them in the fellowship of the sacrament, that Gospel of Luke which we earnestly defend

Tertullian and the African Church

has been maintained from its first publication.' Elsewhere he mentions the other Gospels, saying that Mark's may be maintained as Peter's, just as Luke's is generally ascribed to Paul. Here, again, we find no mention of James, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John.

To sum up, then, we find Irenaeus recognizing that 'the Scriptures are perfect, inasmuch as they were uttered by the word of God, and His Spirit,' and for him 'Scriptures' evidently means the Old and New Testament alike.

Summary Clement acknowledges a collection of 'Scriptures of the Lord,' called 'the Gospel and the Apostle.' He speaks of the unity produced by 'the harmony of the Law and the Prophets, and of the Apostles and the Gospels in the Church.' To Tertullian we owe the definite naming of the collection when he says, 'If I shall not clear up this point by investigations of the Old Scripture, I will take the proof of our interpretation from the New Testament.'

These three were men of profound sagacity and insight, representing fairly comprehensively the Christian Church, Catholic and Apostolic, at the end of the second century. They speak quite naturally of their acceptance of this collection of books as having the weight of inspiration and a position of authority co-equal with that of the Jewish Scriptures. Their testimony is borne out by contemporary writers, and it reveals an unbroken connexion with Apostolic times. No

thought of discussion or official pronouncement on the subject of canonization as such is yet above the horizon.

Nevertheless gradually, silently, and the more strongly for the absence of official action, there has emerged by the year 190, a New Testament Canon in all but name. The idea is there as a living entity, but it is not yet by any means definite. The main bulk is accepted everywhere. Four Gospels, assuredly those which we hold; the Acts, thirteen Epistles of Paul (including that to Philemon), 1 Peter, and 1 John are not questioned henceforth. But there is a second group about which we find constant differences of opinion and usage in the different Churches. Hebrews, James, Jude, 2 and 3 John, Revelation and 2 Peter, with two or three other books which eventually failed of acceptance, are disputed here and there for another century-and-a-half. To the history of these we can now almost entirely confine our attention.

CHAPTER VIII

THE THIRD CENTURY

General Survey

WHEN we reach the third century we find ourselves in a new atmosphere. Or perhaps it were more strictly accurate to say that the atmosphere has cleared. Up to this point Christian literature has been fragmentary and not a little obscure. With the turn of the century the Church emerges into the light. It is a force to be reckoned with; no longer tentative and subterranean, but organized and universal, compelling the serious attention of the State, and having for its champions and leaders some of the foremost scholars and statesmen of the day. The best life of the age is now to be found in the ranks of the Christian Church. Both within those ranks and without, it is an age of speculation and of restless intellectual activity. The hearts of men had been won by the earlier teaching of the Apostles and their immediate followers. Their heads had been won by the succeeding generation or two of philosophers and apologists, who had reached

their highest glory in Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian. These men make a natural transition to the age of the Statesmen. Great men have already begun to shape the slowly-developing thought of the Churches, and greater men still are to continue that work, though we find little advance as yet towards official decision and conciliar decree. Material is being collected, and the great groups of Churches are learning one another's points of view and preparing for the harmony of the faith, as regards both contents and expression. Just as the second century revealed, amid the clash of controversy and heresy, the underlying and patently undesigned unity of the New Testament, and the oneness of the real life of the Church based upon Apostolic teaching, so, in the third, under a succession of great teachers, the way is prepared for unanimity in relation to the exact limits of that New Testament.

The Seven Disputed Books

We have reached the point where all the books of the New Testament are acknowledged universally to be Apostolic and authoritative, except Hebrews, 2 and 3 John, Jude, James, Apocalypse, and 2 Peter. Of these seven disputed books which eventually found a place in the Canon, it will have been noted that all but 2 Peter have been acknowledged somewhere or other. James and Hebrews, as might be expected, have been admitted chiefly

by the Syrian Churches. Equally natural is the reception by the Churches of the West of 2 and 3 John and Jude, and of the Apocalypse by Asia Minor. We need spend no more time upon the undisputed books, but we must trace the process by which, during the third century and the first half or thereabouts of the fourth, these seven succeeded in winning the place in the Canon which was denied to other highly estimable writings which ultimately failed to approve themselves. It will be best to take the great sections of Christendom one by one, and examine in detail the treatment severally accorded to these books by the Alexandrian, African (Latin), Roman, (Latin and Greek), and Eastern Churches.

The Alexandrian Church—Origen

We turn to the testimony of Origenes Adamantius, or Origen called the Adamantine, from his iron will, as our first representative of the Alexandrian Churches. He was born of Christian parents (almost the first great Christian teacher of whom this can be said) at Alexandria in 185. He is the most eminent Churchman of the early centuries, the most voluminous writer, perhaps, of any age, and he united in his suffering person a rare combination of heroism under persecution, courage in the promulgation of unpopular doctrinal views, and remarkable insight into the Scriptures. His father, Leonidas, was martyred in 202, and Origen was with

difficulty restrained from courting the same fate. He attended the catechetical lessons of Clement, and, when Clement fled, he was appointed his successor. Into his further history, with its sad story of persecution and disappointments, we have no space here to enter. Suffice it for us that he was the founder of the scientific exegesis of Scripture.

Eusebius must be our authority for the judgement of Origen as it relates to the Canon. He quotes the following opinions upon the books under discussion: 'Peter . . . has left behind one Epistle generally acknowledged; perhaps also a second, for it is a disputed question. John, who left behind a single Gospel, wrote moreover the Apocalypse, having been commanded to keep silence, and not to write the voices of the seven thunders. He has left behind also one Epistle of very few lines: perhaps too a second and third; for all do not allow that these are genuine; nevertheless both together do not contain a hundred lines.' Elsewhere, in a work of which we have only a Latin translation which may have been tampered with, he makes very decided reference to the 'Epistles' of Peter; to those of James and Jude; and to the 'Epistles and Apocalypse' of John. In yet another passage he sums up the case for the Epistle to the Hebrews thus: 'If I were to express my own opinion I should say that the thoughts are the Apostle's, but the diction and composition that of some one

recording from memory the Apostle's teaching and as it were illustrating with a brief commentary the sayings of his Master. If then any Church hold this Epistle to be Paul's, we cannot blame it for so doing; for it was not without good reason that the men of old have handed it down as Paul's. But God alone knows for certain who wrote it. The account which has come to us varies, some saying that Clement who was bishop of Rome wrote it, while others give it to Luke the author of the Gospel and the Acts.'

We may say, then, that Origen is firm in his own acceptance of Hebrews, Jude, and Revelation, but more or less uncertain about James, 2 Peter, and 2 and 3 John.

Dionysius of Alexandria

Dionysius, one of Origen's most celebrated pupils, became head of the Catechetical School in Alexandria about 231, was made bishop in 247, and after a stormy career, during which he was twice banished, died about 265. He came into personal contact with many leading men over a wide area of the East, and fragments of his extensive correspondence with various Churches in Asia Minor, Palestine, and Rome are extant, from which it is evident that he was impressed with the catholicity of the Church generally. He can state that 'all Syria, and Arabia and Mesopotamia, Pontus and Bithynia, and to speak briefly, all everywhere rejoice in oneness of mind and brotherly love,

glorifying God.' He uses Hebrews as from the pen of Paul, quotes James, and seems to have received 2 and 3 John as the work of the Apostle John. He does not acknowledge the Johannine authorship of Revelation, though he accepts it as canonical. In this particular opinion on its origin, however, he does not speak for the Alexandrian Church. He gives us no light on the question of Jude and 2 Peter.

The later teachers at Alexandria do not give us much further information. The testimony of that Church at the close of the third century is clearly in favour of Hebrews and Revelation as canonical books, though their authorship is uncertain. James, Jude, and 2 and 3 John are still in the balance, while nobody but Origen shows any knowledge of 2 Peter.

The Witness of the Churches in Africa

We have seen that Tertullian, the first great Father of the Latin Church in Africa, accepted the Old Latin Version. He attributed Hebrews to Barnabas, and, though he gave it a higher place than to the *Shepherd* of Hermas, he did not consider it to have Apostolic authority. Cyprian, who became bishop of Carthage in 248, denied the Pauline authorship by stating that Paul wrote to *seven* Churches, the number seven having for him, as for many others in early times, a mystical meaning. It is not until we come to Hilary (bishop of Poitiers, 350) that we find a

Latin Father quoting it as Paul's, and his judgement was influenced by Origen.

The Catholic Epistles in dispute fare little better. Tertullian once quotes Jude as Apostolic, but he says nothing of the others, and Cyprian makes no reference to any of them. In fact his mention of the first letters of John and Peter is of such a nature as to lead irresistibly to the inference that he knew of no second ones.

For the Apocalypse, on the other hand, we have full acknowledgement from Tertullian of its Johannine authorship, and Cyprian quotes it as Scripture, though he does not specifically mention it as John's. The Latin Churches of Africa, everywhere and always, give it their hearty recognition.

Thus it will be seen that the Latin Churches err only on the side of conservatism in the matter of the Canon. There is manifested what we may call a sense or instinct of the Canon in the later Fathers of this region. The fourfoldness of the gospel and the sevenfoldness of the Pauline letter-writing, due to the significance of those numbers, evidences a feeling of the propriety of a limit which, while it does not reveal itself in public verdict, is, nevertheless, proof of the existence of what we are seeking, namely an acknowledgement of the superior sanctity of a definite collection of books which can be regarded as a norm.

The Latin Church which grew up in Rome during the third century provides us with very

little for our present purpose until we come to the Novatian Schism, from 251 onwards. This was a protest, headed by Novatian of Rome and Novatus of Carthage, against the re-admission of the lapsed and other offenders into Church membership. It was characterized by great strictness of doctrine and practice; and, even when the Epistle to the Hebrews was generally acknowledged, the reading of it was omitted in some Churches on account of its teaching on repentance, from fear of its being misunderstood. At the same time no mention of it is made by the Novatians and their opponents, which further emphasizes the inference that it was not held to be authoritative in their day.

Roman Churches Latin and Greek

In the Greek Church in Rome, Caius (about 213) is said by Eusebius to have allowed only thirteen Epistles of Paul, thus omitting Hebrews. He is also said to have attributed Revelation to Cerinthus. Of the writer Hippolytus we have already heard. In a very strongly worded protest against the habit of certain heretics of 'fearlessly tampering with the Divine Scriptures while they said that they had corrected them,' he evinces the watchfulness with which the Scriptures were guarded and the consequent recognition of limits which amount to canonization in all but name. There are resemblances in some of his writings to Jude or 2 Peter, and he attributes the

Apocalypse to John, but he is said not to have included Hebrews among Paul's writings.

The testimony of Irenaeus has been previously noticed. He is essentially a witness for the Churches of Asia Minor, where he spent his early life, though he is officially connected with the Church in Gaul. He acknowledges the Apocalypse as John's, but does not attribute Hebrews to Paul. Our next authority is Gregory Thaumaturgus, or the Wonder-worker, bishop of Neo-Caesarea in Pontus from 244 to 270, one of Origen's most distinguished disciples. In a fragment of his writing there is a passage which strongly suggests the use of James—'For it is clear that every good and perfect thing comes from God'—and Origen, in writing to him, uses a passage from Hebrews, from which we may reasonably infer his acceptance of that book. It is also of value to us to note the free intercourse between Asia Minor and the Alexandrian Church. In this interchange of thought among Churches widely separated in space there lies the force that will presently bring unanimity out of their early diversity of usage. An interesting instance of this is found in Origen's visit to Syria, where he was in turn visited by Firmilian, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, and a warm friend of Cyprian of Carthage. Firmilian has left us a letter in which he seems to refer to 2 Peter: 'The blessed Apostles Peter and Paul

The East—Asia Minor and Syria

have execrated heretics and their epistles, and warned us to avoid them' (see 2 Peter ii. 1). Methodius, who is demonstrably independent of the judgement of Origen, for he showed active hostility to his teaching (311), acknowledged the Apocalypse to be John's, and received Hebrews as Scripture, without regarding it as Paul's.

Jude receives no testimony from the Asian Churches, and, as we have seen, that given for James and 2 Peter is uncertain. The Apocalypse and 2 John were accepted as authentic, and we may put with the second letter of John the third also, as they stand or fall together.

Turning to Syria, we find nothing of note until we come to Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, 168 to 180. There are possible references to Hebrews and Revelation, and a striking coincidence with the language of 2 Peter i. 19: 'His word shining as a light in a chamber, enlightening the world.'

A very interesting Synodical decision is recorded in the case of Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch from 260 onwards, whose heretical teaching led to his deposition from his see. A Synod of orthodox bishops addressed a letter to him in which Hebrews is quoted as Paul's. This is the first instance of official pronouncement. A somewhat similar statement of belief, written to the officials of Alexandria and Rome by Malchion of Antioch in the name of the Church dignitaries of that neighbourhood, refers to this unorthodox

Paul in language evidently inspired by Jude. For the rest, the evidence from Antioch is mainly in the direction of a growingly careful orthodoxy as shaped by the Scriptures, which are recognized by all parties as authoritative.

Antioch has given us our first Synodical decision. Another part of Syria gives us our first important Christian library. Pamphilus of Caesarea, a friend of Eusebius and the apologist of Origen, copied with his own hand most of Origen's works and added them to a library which he had founded at Caesarea, which existed for long afterwards. Copies of the Scriptures made much later than this were either made from the contents of this library or compared with them. An early and important manuscript of the Pauline Epistles which contains the Epistle to the Hebrews before the Pastoral Epistles has a note stating that it had been compared with the autograph of Pamphilus. Euthalius of Alexandria, in the middle of the fifth century, published an edition of the Acts and the seven Catholic Epistles which he says was compared with the copies in this library. This gives weight to the presumption that the seven Catholic Epistles were made into a collection by the end of the third century. Pamphilus accepted Origen's judgement on the Apocalypse, namely, that it was the work of the Apostle John.

The Library of Pamphilus

Syria, then, witnessed to the Canon as we now accept it. So did Alexandria. The Latin Churches give us no evidence for the use of James or 2 Peter, nor do they accept Hebrews as the work of Paul. The Apocalypse is the only book of the seven which finds universal acceptance among the recognized Scriptures at the close of the third century, but there are, somewhere or other, valuable testimonies to each of the other six.

Apocryphal New Testament Books

It still remains for us to scan briefly the history of the various books which, from time to time, have made some claim to inclusion in the New Testament. Of these, the *Epistle of Clement* (of Rome), the *Epistle of Barnabas* and the *Shepherd of Hermas* are the only early writings which were ever likely to be regarded as having serious claims. The Epistle of Clement was read in the Churches from very early times without being considered as of the same standing as the Apostolic letters. By the time, at any rate, that the idea of special sanctity attached to the latter, the letter of Clement had ceased to be held in any particular reverence. It is quoted by Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, but with no suggestion of scriptural character. Eusebius does not give it in his list of authoritative books. The Epistle of Barnabas, by reason of the confusion of its author's name with that of the companion of St. Paul,

found in Alexandria a reverence which it gained nowhere else. One great manuscript of the Bible, the Sinaitic, includes it and the *Shepherd* after the New Testament, but the Fathers of the fourth century and later call it apocryphal or spurious. The *Shepherd*, though included thus in some copies of the Bible, is stated by Tertullian to have been excluded from the New Testament by every Council of the Churches. It was long used for instruction, but though it is found in the Latin Bibles and in at least one Greek manuscript, it never really gained recognition as canonical. With other apocryphal writings, such as the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, the *Gospel of Peter*, the *Preaching of Peter*, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and the *Gospel to the Egyptians*, we have here nothing to do, for they never attained to any general recognition. By the time of Eusebius, which we have now reached, no one of these writings above-mentioned was recognized as having any claim to canonicity.

CHAPTER IX

THE FOURTH CENTURY

THE fourth century had scarcely opened ere the Christian Church was severely tested by persecution. The previous attack in the reign of Valerian had sought to win back the populace by killing their leaders, degrading Christians of rank, and closing the churches and cemeteries. Valerian's son and co-Emperor, Gallienus, a weak and worthless man, prompted doubtless by the fact that Christianity was rapidly becoming the dominant force in high places, reversed this policy and issued his Edicts of Toleration in 261. Exiles were recalled, cemeteries reopened, and Christianity proclaimed a *religio licita*, or a permitted religion. A period of forty years of peace and undisturbed expansion followed, during which the Christian Churches became more and more powerful and wealthy.

The Results of Persecution

This was at length brought to an end by the last great persecution, that of Diocletian, which began in 303. An edict was issued that all

churches were to be destroyed, all Church property confiscated, all who engaged in private Christian worship were to be put to death, and all copies of the Scriptures were to be given up to the magistrates for destruction.

The immediate result of this last demand was the introduction of serious discord into the Church itself. A large number saved their lives by handing over their books, many of which were only heretical writings and of little worth, though unquestionably many books perished which would have been of inestimable value to the student of early Church history. Such conduct, even when the books were not of special sanctity, was regarded by others as treachery, and those who adopted such means for securing themselves were branded *traditores* or traitors. It was inevitable that such circumstances should lead, sooner or later, to the settlement in the minds of Christians generally of at least the broader aspects of the problem of canonicity. While the immediate formation of the Canon was not attained, the way was made easier for its eventual crystallization.

Destruction of the Scriptures

It is unfortunate that the edict which condemned to burning 'the Scriptures of the Law' cannot now be recovered, but it must have specified the books which can thus be spoken of as an integral collection. We must therefore seek the

list, or indications of its composition, elsewhere.

The Canon of the Donatists

Augustine (born 354) was closely connected with the great Donatist controversy which arose in North Africa over this very question of the betrayal of the Scriptures. He tells us that the Canonical Scriptures of the Law must have added to them 'the Gospels, the Apostolic Epistles, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Apocalypse of John.' This testimony, though late in the century, would be perfect if we were quite sure of the Donatist view of the Epistle to the Hebrews which Augustine does not state clearly.

The Witness of Eusebius

Pamphilus was mentioned at length in the last chapter. His close friend Eusebius, of whom we have also frequently heard, is our great authority for this period. He was born at Berytus (modern Beirut) in Syria, between 260 and 270, studied at Alexandria and Antioch, and became bishop of Caesarea in Palestine about 315. He died in 340. His labours as a Church historian have proved invaluable to us, especially in connexion with our present study, for he gives considerable attention to the question of the employment of the disputed books. He admits 2 Peter to be useful though not canonical. He is himself prepared to acknowledge fourteen Epistles of Paul, but says that the Roman Church disputes the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the canonicity of the *Shepherd*.

One Epistle of John is unquestioned, but the other two are challenged, as are James and Jude. Revelation is in the balance. He inclines to place it among the spurious books, but he is uncertain. Meanwhile he allows that it is generally received. He rejects the *Epistle of Barnabas*, with some other apocryphal works. Elsewhere he quotes James as Scripture. His canon thus coincides with ours, save for his uncertainty concerning the Apocalypse. He is inclined to hold that Hebrews was originally written in Hebrew by Paul and then translated into Greek by Luke, or, more probably, by Clement of Rome. Even in discussing the Epistles of James and Jude he speaks of 'the seven Epistles called Catholic' as of a well-known group with a definite order among themselves.

Thus both in Africa and the East, persecution has helped to define a canon, within which are clearly marked groups: four Gospels, fourteen Pauline Epistles, seven Catholic Epistles, with, as isolated types, Acts and the disputed Apocalypse.

Constantine and his Commission

Before we leave Eusebius, we may note that the Emperor Constantine (312-337), late in his reign, commissioned him to prepare fifty copies of the Scriptures for the Churches of his new city of Constantinople. Two of these may possibly survive in the famous codices known

as the Sinaitic and the Vatican MSS. In the former, Hebrews stands as a Pauline Epistle, and there are seven Catholic Epistles, Revelation, and, in addition at the end, *Barnabas* and the *Shepherd*. In the latter, there are the seven Catholic Epistles, the Pauline Epistles as far as Thessalonians, then Hebrews to ix. 14, after which, as in the Sinaitic, probably followed the Pastorals and Revelation.

While we are in Palestine we will just glance at Cyril of Jerusalem, who, in his catechetical lectures written about 346, recommends as the New Testament Scriptures the usual acknowledged books, with seven Catholic Epistles and fourteen of Paul's. He omits Revelation. But his fellow countryman and younger contemporary, Epiphanius, who was bishop of Salamis in Cyprus at the commencement of the fifth century, gives, in a work against heresies, a canon identical with our own. He knows of disputes concerning the Apocalypse, but accepts it whole-heartedly himself.

Cyril of Jerusalem and Epiphanius

The action of Constantine in providing so extensively for the public reading of the Scriptures in the capital of the East would naturally affect the whole question of the Canon. When public opinion is ripe for expression it does not take much to precipitate it. An ecclesiastical standard was thus set up which was not in any marked

degree at variance with more or less general practice. It will be seen that the Canon of the two MSS. which, if not actually portions of the commission to Eusebius, are roughly contemporary with it, errs by excess, not by defect. The Apocalypse is included, though it is still viewed with suspicion by some. The other books, which are no longer found in our canon, indicate by their very position at the end of the New Testament the lesser esteem in which they were held henceforth.

The Results of Constantine's Benevolence

The reign of Constantine is famous for the rise of the great Arian controversy which led to the convening of the first General Council, which met at Nicaea in Bithynia in 325, and consisted of three hundred and eighteen bishops and several hundreds of other clergy. Much use was necessarily made of Scripture, and while the Council was not concerned with questions of canonicity, there emerge from the debates the facts that Hebrews was quoted as Paul's, and that the Catholic Epistles were recognized as a definite collection.

The Nicaean Council, 325

A small local Synod which met at Laodicea in Phrygia in 363 was the first to busy itself about the books of the Bible. It is in the official findings of this little gathering of local clergy that the words *canonize* and *canonical* first formally occur. These findings consist of fifty-nine

articles, the last of which is a list of the books of the Bible. This gives us the New Testament as we now know it, except for the omission of Revelation, but it is almost certain that the fifty-ninth article is spurious; that is, it was added later. It is significant of what obtained, nevertheless, only a few years later in Asia Minor.

The Synod of Laodicea, 363

The failure of this Synod as a witness drives us to the third Council of Carthage, 397, for the first actual and unquestioned synodical decision. This gives us our New Testament precisely as we know it, save that James immediately precedes Jude. This decision is the more noteworthy as it is the utterance of a whole province. The African Church here speaks without any sense of innovation, as though it is the voice of habitual opinion.

The Third Council of Carthage, 397

The Laodicene Synod speaks for a portion of Asia Minor, where we have noticed the phenomenon of the rejection in the fourth century of the Apocalypse which was accepted by them in the second, and which had been addressed specially to certain Churches of that region. While we are looking at Asia Minor we must notice Gregory Nazianzen. He was born at Arianzus near Nazianzus in Cappadocia, in 329, studied at Caesarea in his native province and at the Palestinian town of the same name,

at Alexandria and Athens, and eventually became bishop of Constantinople in 381, where he died in 389. He thus sums up in himself the influence of Asia Minor, Palestine, Alexandria, Greece, and Constantinople. He was a great theologian, poet, and orator. He also follows Asiatic precedent in omitting Revelation from his list, but he compensates in part for his omission by quoting from it as the teaching of John. In this he is followed by his friend Basil of Cappadocia (329–379) and Basil's younger brother Gregory of Nyssa (died 395), so that it must have regained its partly lost recognition as Scripture in their day and neighbourhood. Another Asian voice is that of Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium, contemporary with the above, who gives us a versified form of the Canon as he accepts it, in which he recognizes without sympathy the doubts as to Hebrews, but seems to agree with the similar doubts as to 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and Revelation. These all seem to have looked upon Hebrews as Pauline.

The Gregories and Basil

Turning now to Alexandria our attention is attracted by the figure of Athanasius, the orthodox champion in the Arian controversy while still a presbyter. He became bishop of Alexandria in 328. It was the custom of the bishop to address an annual letter to the clergy of his province announcing the date of Easter and other feasts. The

Athanasius

thirty-ninth of these from the pen of Athanasius, bearing the character of a general Pastoral, treats of the Holy Scriptures and gives a list of the New Testament books as then received in Alexandria. They are four Gospels, Acts, seven Catholic Epistles, fourteen Epistles of Paul (with Hebrews between Thessalonians and Timothy), Apocalypse. He further recommends for instruction some Old Testament Apocrypha and the *Teaching of the Apostles* and the *Shepherd*. He accepts the Pauline authorship of Hebrews evidently from the position which he assigns it. By this time the unity of the Catholic Epistles has become so well recognized that there is no further attempt to disturb it. We find in Alexandria a certain freedom of usage with regard to the Apocrypha of the Old Testament, which is not surprising when we remember the Alexandrian Canon in comparison with the narrower Jewish one.

Syria and Chrysostom

The Syrian Churches remained for long faithful to their Peshito Version. An interesting Syrian catalogue is preserved for us among the works of John the 'Golden-mouthed,' or Chrysostom, a presbyter of Antioch, who became bishop of Constantinople in 398. The order of the New Testament books in that list is curious: fourteen Epistles of Paul, four Gospels, Acts, and three Catholic Epistles (James, 1 Peter, and 1 John). The omission of Revelation and the other four Catholic Epistles is paralleled

by Chrysostom's own practice, for he never uses them. Theodore of Mopsuestia (350–428) rejected James as well, but he speaks only for himself. Ephrem Syrus, the great Syrian writer of the early part of the fifth century, refers to the Apocalypse and 2 Peter in his Syriac works, while the Greek works have references to the whole of the New Testament.

Jerome

Our authorities for the West are both of them of unusual distinction and power. Jerome was born at Stridon on the borders of Dalmatia and Pannonia about 340, studied in Rome, travelled far in the north and east, was presbyter at Antioch, visited Constantinople, Rome again, wandered widely, and settled finally at Bethlehem in 386, where he died in 420. There he devoted himself to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and revised the Old Latin Version of the New Testament with the help of Greek MSS. He also retranslated the Old Testament from the Hebrew, and his work became the 'Vulgate' or *common* Version in use throughout the Latin Church. It lies at the base of all the European versions since his day. He distinguished between the canonical and the apocryphal (but still edifying) books; and in the New Testament he followed the Greek canon, though he seems to have questioned the Pauline authorship of Hebrews, which he placed at the end of the unquestioned Epistles of Paul. He notes the Latin doubts of Hebrews and the Greek

suspicion of the Apocalypse, but says that 'we accept both, following the authority of ancient writers.' He further comments on the uncertainty attaching to the controverted Catholic Epistles.

Augustine passed a very eventful youth, and was over thirty years old when he was converted in 387. In 395 he became bishop of Hippo in North Africa. His early connexion with the Manichaeans led him quickly to attempt some settlement by a Council of the Canon, for these heretics had been much addicted to the use of apocryphal writings. The subject was ventilated at a Council at Hippo in 393, and was dealt with at the Third Council of Carthage (397), to which we have already had our attention drawn. The agreement of Rome was to be sought to confirm this decree, but not until a further Council at Carthage in 419 does it seem to have been obtained.

Augustine

This brings us well over the boundary of the fourth century. We have arrived at a point where there is practical unanimity in all the great divisions of Christendom as to the contents of the New Testament. Councils have spoken, and great men have pronounced their individual opinions. Certain provincial tendencies still prevail to disturb the perfect harmony of mind, but they do not long persist, as we shall see in our concluding chapter.

CHAPTER X

THE FINAL SETTLEMENT

JEROME and Augustine practically settled the orthodox Canon for the West. Jerome's work on the translation of the Bible was undertaken at the request of Bishop Damasus of Rome, and, as we have seen, his version became the Bible of the Latin-speaking world. Later Popes only confirmed what had been enacted earlier. Augustine allowed a certain freedom of opinion with regard to the disputed books, though he accepted them himself. Gaul and Spain, Britain and Ireland, followed these influential Fathers, and thus Europe accepted the now completely established Canon.

Result of the work of Jerome and Augustine

The Eastern Churches, largely Greek, with Constantinople as their virtual capital and head, shared the decline of the Greek language, and, presently, were almost obliterated by the assault of Islam. Latin and the Latin Churches

became supreme, and their Canon was thenceforth unquestioned. This is not to say that no further doubts were expressed as to individual books. Augustine's virtual distinction of degrees of inspiration, and therefore of canonicity, was often emulated in later times. Hebrews was frequently questioned in the West as Revelation had been in the East, but no fresh attempt was made to exclude any of these books from the New Testament into which the common consent of the Church had admitted them.

Decay of the East Latin Ascendancy

There was only one attempt, and that more interesting than important, to introduce a new book into the Canon. Alfric, abbot of Cerne in Dorsetshire (989), and afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, in a treatise on the New Testament, includes among 'the fifteen epistles of Paul' one *to the Laodiceans*. The earliest traces of this epistle are found in the sixth century in Latin. There was a Greek epistle of the second century under this name, but there is no reason to believe them to be in any way related. The Latin Epistle, quite a short one and evidently constructed of phrases borrowed from the authentic letters, had much vogue in the sixth and later centuries, and actually found its way into a Latin New Testament which is still to be seen at Fulda. Thenceforward Western

The Epistle to the Laodiceans

MSS. frequently contained it, and it seems to have derived its strength of appeal from Gregory the Great, who says, 'though Paul wrote fifteen epistles, yet the Holy Church does not hold more than fourteen,' thus accepting the authenticity but denying the canonicity of the document. It was the supposed Pauline authorship which carried weight with the many. Here, it was believed, was the epistle referred to in Col. iv. 16. Modern opinion is almost unanimous in identifying 'the epistle from Laodicea' there mentioned with the circular letter now known as 'The Epistle to the Ephesians.' Howbeit, this strange little intruder continued to appear until the times of Wyclif and Luther, when it was finally dropped.

The Reformation led to a revival of inquiry into the right of canonicity possessed by certain books. The Roman Church settled the matter, with its usual sublime indifference to history, at the Council of Trent (April 8, 1546), but even this famous gathering is no exception to the general statement that can be made, that no General or Ecumenical Council ever came to any decision which contributed to the settlement of the limits of the Canon.

The Reformation: The Roman Church

Luther held freer views even than Augustine on the questions of inspiration and canonicity. His oft-quoted opinion of the Epistle of James as

'a right strawy epistle' occurs in a comparison of that book with John's Gospel and First Epistle, Paul's letters to Romans, Galatians and Ephesians, and 1 Peter, which he held as the books of prime importance. Then follows a second rank, and, at the end of his translation, come Hebrews, James, Jude, and Apocalypse. The later Lutherans have abandoned the extreme judgements of the Reformer, but they have no definite list of canonical books, save that the Apocryphal writings are placed by themselves and distinguished clearly from Holy Scripture.

Luther

Karlstadt, Luther's great contemporary, argued with much critical acumen for a distinction between various classes of Scriptural books. He enunciated the Reformation principle of the absolute supremacy of the Bible, though he admitted it to be the duty of the Church to collect and canonize the constituent books. Zwingli (1484–1531), of the Swiss School of Reformers, rejected Revelation, and Oecolampadius (1482–1531), while accepting the seven disputed books, put them on a lower level than the others. Calvin recognized the difficulties, but accepted the books in a somewhat critical spirit.

The Other Reformers

At last, as the idea of Inspiration took the place of that of Canonicity, criticism was hushed, opinion hardened, and, one by one, the

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SCHOOL
OF THEOLOGY LIBRARY

The Confessions of Faith

various Confessions were issued in which the New Testament as we have it to-day was detailed, and departures therefrom variously penalized. Beginning with Basle in 1534, there followed the First Helvetic Confession in 1536, the Genevan Catechism of Calvin in 1545, and the second Helvetic Confession in 1566. In all these Scripture is spoken of in the highest and most exclusive terms as the sole rule of piety and life. Among the most important statements issued on the subject is that known as the Westminster Confession in 1646, which definitely repudiates the Old Testament Apocrypha as of no other than mere human value.

The English Church has settled its Canon by usage rather than by decree, so that, in the strictest sense of the term, there never has been a Canon. The New Testament has just come into being in answer to the needs of the Church. Christianity is a life, and that life has expressed itself in two directions: it has felt a need, and has set about to satisfy that want.

He who gave the Living Word has breathed the breath of life into the Church, and His Word has not only

> . . . had breath, and wrought
> With human hands the creed of creeds
> In loveliness of perfect deeds,
> More strong than all poetic thought,

but has spoken through the Apostles and others

to a Church whose heart was prepared to hear and to discern, and she has been led to the final selection of those books in which God spoke to the hearts and consciences of men.

BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

For many years Westcott's *A General Survey of the Canon of the New Testament* (Macmillan) was the standard, almost the only, work on the subject. The same author's *The Bible in the Church* (Macmillan) contains the substance of the larger work in popular form. In both of these the student will find much of great value, but he will need to supplement them by the study of more recent works as the latest edition of his 'Canon' is nearly eighteen years old.

On the whole subject no book can compare with Dr. C. R. Gregory's *Canon and Text of the New Testament* (T. & T. Clark). The results of the latest discoveries and scholarship have been incorporated in this excellent handbook.

Other books dealing with the New Testament generally are: *An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, by Dr. James Moffatt (T. & T. Clark), in which useful bibliographies are to be found; *The Bible as English Literature*, by J. H. Gardiner (Unwin), in which there is manifest sympathy with the Higher Criticism: *A Guide to Biblical Study*, by Professor Peake (Hodder & Stoughton), which is useful as a map of the country to be explored.

To these may be added:

The Cambridge Companion to the Bible (Cambridge Press).

The Oxford Helps to the Study of the Bible (University Press).

A Short Introduction to the Bible, by G. T. Sadler (Williams & Norgate).

An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, by S. R. Driver (T. & T. Clark).

The Bible: Its Origin and Nature, by Marcus Dods (T. & T. Clark).

The Old Testament: Its Authorship, Date, and Worth, by J. Agar Beet (Charles H. Kelly).

The New Testament: Its Contents, Truth, and Worth, by J. Agar Beet (Charles H. Kelly).

How We Got Our Bible, by J. Paterson Smyth (Low).

Coming to the specific portions of our study, Ryle's *The Canon of the Old Testament* (Macmillan) is the standard work upon its subject. Kirkpatrick's *The Divine Library of the Old Testament* (Macmillan) consists of five lectures in semi-popular style upon the Origin, Preservation, Inspiration, and Permanent Value of the Old Testament. There is a useful little book in the HOME UNIVERSITY LIBRARY (Williams & Norgate) by Dr. B. W. Bacon on *The Making of the New Testament*.

The history of the Early Church and the growth of her institutions are dealt with in a vast number of works from which the following may be selected: *A History of the Christian Church during the First Six Centuries*, by S. Cheetham (Macmillan), which summarizes the subject very conveniently for the general student; *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, by T. M. Lindsay (Hodder & Stoughton), dealing with the first three centuries; and, in a more popular style, Dean Farrar's *The Early Days of Christianity* (Cassell). There is a valuable epitome of Church History in the MANUALS FOR CHRISTIAN THINKERS (Kelly) entitled *The Church of Twenty Centuries*, by A. W. Harrison, B.Sc., B.D.

The Fathers are to be read in English, and their Lives are recorded in FATHERS FOR ENGLISH READERS (S.P.C.K.), a series of cheap volumes by various authors

on the chief Fathers. The series is still in progress. F. J. A. Hort's *Six Lectures on the Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Macmillan) gives extracts from their chief writings. *Patristic Study*, by H. B. Swete, is meant for Churchmen, and young clergymen in particular.

The Church Councils are treated in A. N. Blatchford's *Church Councils and their Decrees* (P. Green), and W. P. du Bose's *The Ecumenical Councils* (T. & T. Clark).

Finally, most public libraries now contain copies of Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, in five volumes (T. & T. Clark). In its pages can be found articles by experts upon every topic connected with our study, and the index of cross-references in the fifth volume will enable the student to find everything that he wants. The works of such students as Harnack, Pfleiderer, Jülicher, Van Soden, and others can also be found in most libraries, and are very useful for reference.

INDEX

Abgarus, 83
Alexandria, 26, 53, 89, 96–9, 103, 116, 109, 114–15
Alfric of Cerne, 119
Amphilochius of Iconium, 114
Antioch, 53, 104, 109, 116
Apion, 28
Apocrypha: O.T., 27, 115, 116, 121, 122.
N.T., 65, 69, 83, 105–6, 110–11, 115–17
Apologists, 54, 56, 59, 71, 94
Aramaic, 37, 82
Arianzus, 113
Athanasius of Alexandria, 114, 115
Augustine of Hippo, 109, 117–20

Barnabas, 85, 99
Barnabas, Epistle of, 49, 50, 53, 90, 105, 110, 111
Bartholomew, 89
Basil of Cappadocia, 114
Basilides of Alexandria, 75, 76
Bethlehem, 116
Books, Disputed, 95–121
Bryennios, 55

Caesarea (Cappadocia), 102, 113
(Palestine), 58, 104, 109, 113
Caius of Rome, 101
Calvin, 121
Canons, Apostolic, 42
Carpocrates of Alexandria, 76
Carthage, 84, 113, 117
Cerinthus of Ephesus, 73–5, 101
Chrysostom of Constantinople, 115
Clement of Alexandria, 77, 86, 89, 90, 92, 95, 97, 105
Clement of Rome, 42, 65, 72, 98, 110
Clement, Epistle of, 42–6, 105
Clement, Second Epistle of, 42, 65
Clementine Homilies, 42, 75
Recognitions, 42
Confessions of Faith, 122
Constantine, Emperor, 110–12
Constantinople, 55, 110, 114–6, 118
Constitutions, Apostolic, 42
Cyprian of Carthage, 99, 100, 102
Cyril of Jerusalem, 111

Damasus of Rome, 118
Diatessaron, 80, 81
Didache (Teaching of Twelve Apostles), 54, 115
Diocletian, Emperor, 107
Diognetus, Epistle to, 59
Dionysius of Alexandria, 98
of Corinth, 69
Donatist Controversy, 109

Ebionites, 54, 72, 75
Edessa, 81, 83
Eleazar of Jerusalem, 26
Encratites (Self-Masterers), 80
Ephrem Syrus, 81, 116
Epiphanius of Salamis, 111
Euripides, 16
Eusebius of Caesarea, 56, 64, 69, 70, 87, 90, 97, 101, 104–6, 109
Euthalius of Alexandria, 104
Ezra, 21, 22

Firmilian of Caesarea, 102
Flavia Neapolis (Nablous), 60

Gallienus, Emperor, 107
Gnosticism, 38, 72, 74, 77
Gospel of Eve, 77
of the Hebrews, 65, 106
of Perfection, 77
of Peter, 106
of Truth, 77
to the Egyptians, 106
Gregory the Great, 120
Nazianzen, 113
Nyssen, 114
Thaumaturgus, 102

Hegesippus of Palestine, 56, 64, 65
Heracleon of Rome, 77, 78
Heresies, Against, 73
Hermas, Shepherd of, 49, 50, 68, 99, 105, 106, 109, 111, 115
Hierapolis, 56, 58
Hilary of Poitiers, 99
Hippolytus of Portus, 73, 75, 101

Ignatius of Antioch, 46–8
Irenaeus of Lyons, 48, 76, 78, 86 89, 92, 95, 102, 105

JAMNIA, 25
Jerome of Bethlehem, 70, 116, 118
John the Presbyter, 57, 58
Josephus, 28
Josiah, 21, 22
Justin, Martyr of Rome, 56, 60–2, 64, 67, 69, 80

KARLSTADT 121

LAODICEA, Synod of, 112
Laodiceans, Epistle to, 67, 119, 120
Law, Roll of, 21
Lectionaries, 28, 33
Logia of Jesus, 37
Luther, Martin, 120, 121
Lyons, 48, 84, 87

MAGNESIA, 46
Malchion of Antioch, 103
Marcion of Rome, 67, 79, 80, 81, 91
Marcosians, 78
Marcus Aurelius, 59, 61, 66, 67
Mariamne, 74
Megilloth, 24, 34
Melito of Sardis, 29, 66
Menander of Samaria, 72, 75
Methodius of Tyre, 103
Moses, 20, 21
Muratori's *Fragment*, 67

NAASENES, 74
Nazianzus, 113
Nicaea, Council of, 112
Novatian of Rome, 101
Novatus of Carthage, 101
Nyssa, 114

OECOLAMPADIUS, 121
Onesimus of Sardis, 66
Ophites, 74
Oracles of the Lord, Exposition of, 57
Origen of Alexandria, 78, 96–9, 100–5

PAMPHILUS of Caesarea, 104, 109
Pantaenus of Alexandria, 89
Papias of Hierapolis, 49, 56, 58, 60
Paul of Samosata, 103
Pentateuch, 21, 22
Peshito, 82–4, 115
Peter, Apocalypse of, 106
Preaching of, 78, 106
Philadelphia, 46
Philip the Evangelist, 58
Philo of Alexandria, 16, 28
Polycarp of Smyrna, 46–8, 56, 75, 79, 87
Pothinus of Gaul, 87
Ptolemaeus of Rome, 78
Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt, 26

ROMAN Empire, 12, 20, 26, 51

SARDIS, 29
Septuagint, 26, 27, 35, 63
Simon Magus of Samaria, 72, 73
Sinaitic Codex, 106, 111
Smyrna, 46–8, 87
Snake-Worshippers, 74
Soter of Rome, 69

TATIAN of Assyria, 80, 81
Temple, 20–2, 33
Tertullian of Carthage, 76, 84–6, 91–2, 95, 99, 100
Theodore of Mopsuestia, 116
Theodoret of Antioch, 81
Theophilus of Antioch, 70, 103
Traditores, 108
Tralles, 46
Trent, Council of, 120
Trypho, 61

VALENTINUS of Rome, 76, 77, 80, 89
Valerian, Emperor, 107
Vatican Codex, 111
Versions, 82–85
Vespasian, Emperor, 60
Vetus Latina (or *Old Latin*), 83, 84, 99, 116
Vienne, 84, 87
Vulgate, 28, 116, 118

WRITINGS, Holy, 21, 23, 24, 31
Ways, The Two, 55

Zwingli, 121

Theology Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT
California
A 5711

Jarrold & Sons, Ltd., Printers, The Empire Press, Norwich.

BS2320 .P6
Polkinghorne, G. Waddy.
The canon of the New Testament.

S Polkinghorne, G Waddy.
320 The canon of the New Testament. Londo
6 C.H. Kelly [1914]
128p. 18cm.

1. Bible. N.T.--Canon. I. Title.

CCSC/mmb

A5711